THE TIMES OF

Bede

STUDIES IN EARLY ENGLISH CHRISTIAN SOCIETY
AND ITS HISTORIAN

PATRICK WORMALD

Edited by Stephen Baxter

The Times of Bede

For Brian Wormald

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Blackwell
Publishing

Contents

Part I An Early Christian Culture and its Critic

Part II The Impact of Bede's Critique

Foreword

Bede was indisputably the greatest historian of the English Middle Ages, and arguably the greatest English historian of all time. But perceptions of him as scholar and historian have changed markedly over the last generation. Modern scholars no longer contemplate the ways in which he measures up to the standards of accuracy and impartiality which they like to think they can find in themselves. Rather, they stress those values which sharply distinguish Bede's approach from that of most contemporary academics: not merely faith in miracles, but a passionate sense that history is about the working out of God's ways to Man, and that a historian's function was to expound those ways in furtherance of Man's salvation. It has come to be seen that while Bede *is* the most factually reliable source for the first century of English Christianity, he is in many ways *not* its most sympathetic, or therefore (from a modern angle) most perceptive observer. The history of the conversion of the English now takes account of factors and developments to which Bede gave little or no attention.

   The four essays making up Part I of this collection were all originally written and published as variants on this theme. Each is concerned with a significant area of post-conversion experience: broadly speaking, the monastic, social, political and propertied aspects of early Christian culture in England. Each, while exploiting Bede's evidence to the full, seeks to set him in a wider context than his own work permits, and to explain why historians who have been content to take their perspective from Bede have thereby missed important questions and answers. The underlying thesis is that the history of early England cannot be understood without due regard to the priorities of its aristocracy, and that the circumstances of Bede's own life set him largely in opposition to them. A further theme is that English developments need to be seen in their fullest continental context, whereas Bede's own approach has inevitably encouraged the insularity which is second nature to many English historians. The four essays in Part II are reproduced here because in many ways they represent sequels to the first four, and because they show how,

despite (or because of) his detachment, Bede came to exercise a decisive influence on the self-perceptions of the English Church and people. The Appendix was rather more a *pièce d'occasion*, given at the centenary celebrations of St Hilda's College, Oxford in 1993, which here serves as a reminder that women played a more important part in the earliest phase of English Christianity than ever since.

In assembling this collection over the last thirty years, I have often had in mind a classic study of the way in which a historian was moulded by experience of his own times whilst permanently changing its image in the eyes of posterity. I have learned much of what I think about history and historians from the author of *Clarendon: Politics, History and Religion*, since it was published when I was four years old. This book is dedicated to Brian Wormald by a grateful son and pupil, as a proud and loving tribute to an important historian and remarkable teacher.

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Patrick Wormald,
Oxford, 2004

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Editorial Note

One of the tragedies of this book is that neither the author nor the dedicatee lived to see it published, another is that Patrick never wrote the introduction to the volume which he had planned. However, he did check and revise the original footnotes and wrote additional notes to several of the essays. The footnotes to the Brixworth lecture, which was published posthumously, were supplied by Dr Jo Story based on a set of abbreviated references supplied by the author. The publisher arranged for an external professional to proofread the essays against the original publications and to compile the index. Jinty Nelson also helped by reading a set of proofs. We have between us read the proofs, checked the index and identified some of the cross-references.

Tom, Luke and Jenny would like to add their very warm personal thanks – and indeed, Patrick's – to Stephen Baxter, and also to Angela Cohen for all her efforts in seeing this book through to publication. Although it was coming near to completion when Patrick died, there was still a great deal to be done, and it is because of Stephen's painstaking search through the papers Patrick left and the immense amount of work he has put in to getting the manuscript ready for publication that a book so close to Patrick's heart is now in the state that he would have wished. We are very grateful.

Jenny Wormald and Stephen Baxter
April 2006

Acknowledgements

Every effort has been made to trace copyright holders and to obtain their permission for the use of copyright material. The publisher apologizes for any errors or omissions in the above list and would be grateful if notified of any corrections that should be incorporated in future reprints or editions of this book.

Abbreviations

ASC	The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.* Text: *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. J Earle and C. Plummer (2 vols, Oxford, 1892–9); translation, *EHD* I, II.
ASE	*Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge, 1972–).
ASSAH	*Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* (Oxford, 1979–).
Alc. Ep.	*Alcuini Epistolae*, ed. E. Dümmler (MGH, Ep. KA II, Berlin, 1895).
BCS	*Cartularium Saxonicum*, ed. W. de Gray Birch (3+ vols, London, 1885–99).
Bede, ed. Thompson	*Bede, his Life, Times and Writings*, ed. A. Hamilton Thompson (Oxford, 1935).
Beowulf	*Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, ed. F. Klaeber. 3rd edn (Lexington, 1950).
BJRL	*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library.*
Br. Bon.	*Die Briefe des heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus*, ed. M. Tangl (MGH, Ep. Sel. I, Berlin, 1916).
Brown, *Religion and Society*	P. R. L. Brown, *Religion and Society in the Age of St Augustine* (London, 1972).
Brown, *Society and the Holy*	P. R. L. Brown, *Society and the Holy in late Antiquity* (London, 1982).
Campbell, *Anglo Saxons*	The *Anglo-Saxons,* ed. J. Campbell (Oxford, 1982).
Campbell, *Essays*	J. Campbell, *Essays in Anglo-Saxon History* (London, 1986).
Cap.	*Capitularia regum Francorum*, ed. A. Boretius and V. Krause (MGH, Leg. Sect. II, 1883–97).
CCM	*Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale.*
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina (Turnhout).

Chaplais, 'Augustine'	P. Chaplais, 'Who Introduced Charters into England? The Case for Augustine', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 3 (1965–9), pp. 526–42.
Chaplais, 'Chancery'	P. Chaplais, 'The Anglo-Saxon Chancery: from the Diploma to the Writ', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 3 (1965–9), pp. 160–76.
Chaplais, 'Origin'	P. Chaplais, 'The Origin and Authenticity of the Royal Anglo-Saxon Royal Diploma', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 3 (1965–9), pp. 48–61.
Chaplais, 'Single Sheets'	P. Chaplais, 'Some Early Anglo-Saxon Diplomas on Single Originals or Copies?', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 3 (1965–9), pp. 313–36.
CHLA	*Chartae Latinae Antiquiores*, ed. A. Brückner *et al.* (46 vols, Zurich 1954–95).
CLA	E. A. Lowe, *Codices Latini Antiquiores* (Oxford, 1934–71).
CSASE	Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England (general editors S. Keynes, M. Lapidge et al.).
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (Vienna).
de Vogüé, *Benoît*	A. de Vogüé, *La Règle de Saint Benoît,* Sources Chrétiennes 181–6 (Paris, 1971–2).
Councils	*Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents Relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, ed. A. W. Haddam and W. Stubbs. Vol. III, (Oxford, 1871).
Eccl. Hist.	B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (eds), *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969).
Eccl. Hist. Comm.	J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People. A Historical Commentary* (OMT, Oxford, 1988).
Education and Culture	P. Riché, *Education and Culture in the Barbarian West*, trans. J. Contreni (Columbia, SC, 1978) (originally *Education et Culture dans l'occident barbare*, Paris, 1962, to which page references are also supplied).
EEMSF	Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile (Copenhagen).
EETS	Early English Texts Society (London, Oxford).
EHD	*English Historical Documents, vol. I, c. 550–1042*, ed. D. Whitelock (2nd edn, London, 1979); *vol. II, 1042–1189*, ed. D. C. Douglas (2nd edn, London, 1980).
EHR	*English Historical Review.*
EME	*Early Medieval Europe.*
England before the Conquest	*England before the Conquest. Studies in Primary Sources presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. P. Clemoes and K. Hughes (Cambridge, 1971).
Ep. Ecgb.	Epistola Bede ad Ecgbertum Episcopum, ed. Plummer.

Famulus Christi	*Famulus Christi: Essays in Commemoration of the Thirteenth Centenary of the Birth of the Venerable Bede*, ed. G. Bonner (London, 1976).
Gesetze	*Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, ed. F. Liebermann (3 vols. Halle, 1903–16).
Greg. Ep.	Gregoric Magni Epistolae, ed. P. Ewald and L. M. Hartmann (2 vol. MGH Ep., I, II)
HA	Historia Abbatum, ed. Plummer.
HE	*Baedae Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, ed. Plummer.
HZ	*Historische Zeitschrift*.
Ideal	P. Wormald, D. A. Bullough and R. Collins (eds), *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society. Studies presented to J. M. Wallace-Hadrill* (Oxford, 1983).
JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*.
JELH	*Journal of English Literary History*.
JRS	*Journal of Roman Society*.
JThS	*Journal of Theological Studies*.
Levison, *Continent*	W. Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (Oxford, 1946).
Mayr-Harting, *Coming*	H. Mayr-Harting, *The Coming of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon England* (3rd edn, London, 1991).
Leyser, *Medieval Germany*	K. J. Leyser, *Medieval Germany and its Neighbours* (London, 1982).
MEL	P. Wormald, *The Making of English Law. King Alfred to the Twelfth Century Volume I, Legislation and its Limits* (Oxford, 1999).
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica (Hannover, unless otherwise specified).
—— AA	Auctores Antiquissimi.
—— Conc.	Concilia (II– = Aevi Karolini (AK) I–).
—— Ep.	Epistolae (III–VII = Karolini Aevi (KA) I–IV).
—— Ep. Sel.	Epistolae Selectae in usum Scholarum.
—— Leg.	Leges in quarto.
—— SRG	Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum.
—— SRM	Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum.
—— SS	Scriptores in folio.
MLQ	*Modern Language Quarterly*.
MP	*Modern Philology*.
OMT	Oxford Medieval Texts (general editors, C. N. L. Brooke, D. E. Greenway, et al.).
PBA	*Proceedings of the British Academy*.
PL	*Patrologia Latina* (cited by volume and column number).

Plummer	C. Plummer (ed.), *Venerabilis Baedae Opera Historica*. 2 vols (Oxford, 1896).
PMLA	*Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*.
Nelson, *Politics and Ritual*	J. L. Nelson, *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London, 1986).
PP	*Past and Present*.
PQ	*Philological Quarterly*.
RB	*Regula S. Benedicti*, ed. de Vogüé, *Benoît*.
RES	*Review of English Studies*.
Rev. Bn.	*Revue Bénédictine*.
S	As has been the convention since some of these papers were first published, Anglo-Saxon charters are cited by S number (where available), from P. H. Sawyer (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon Charters : An Annotated List and Bibliography* (Royal Historical Society guides and Handbooks 8, London, 1968): currently online at www.trin.cam.ac.uk/ chartwww revised edition by S. E. Kelly with S. D. Keynes; see also *BCS, BMF, ChLA, KCD, OSF*; and as relevant the emergent corpus of British Academy cartulary editions, *Chart. Ab.*, etc.
Sett. Spol.	*Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo* (Spoleto).
Stenton, *ASE*	F. M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (3rd edn, Oxford, 1971).
Stenton, *Prep. ASE*	F. M. Stenton, *Preparatory to Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. D. M. Stenton (Oxford, 1970).
Tacitus	*Tacitus, De Origine et Situ Germanorum*, ed. M. Winterbottom and R. M. Ogilvie, *Cornelii Taciti Opera Minora* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 35–62
TRHS	*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*.
VC	Vita Ceolfridi ('Historia Abbatum auctore Anonymo'), ed. Plummer.
Wallace-Hadrill, *EMH*	J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Early Medieval History* (Oxford, 1975).
Vit. Wilf.	*Eddi Stephani Vita Wilfridi*, ed. W. Levison (MGH, SRM VI) – unless stipulated as *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus*, ed. and trans. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1927).
ZRG	*Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte*.

Dioceses and ministers, to c. 850. Adapted from Malcolm Falkus and John Gillingham, ed. *Historical Atlas of Britain* (London, 1981), p. 35.

PART I

An Early Christian Culture and its Critic

1

Bede and Benedict Biscop

'We are his sons, if we hold by imitation to the path of his virtues, and if we do not turn listlessly aside from the regular course that he has charted.' These are words from the homily for the *dies natalis* of Benedict Biscop, in which Bede assessed the spiritual example of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow's founder. This paper derives its title from the consideration that, even when we have acknowledged the debt that we owe to our tutors and fellow-pupils, there remains an awareness that our character and outlook have been influenced by an educational institution as a whole. I wish therefore to glance beyond the teachers and the friends whom Professor Whitelock has discussed, at aspects of Biscop's legacy. In doing so, I am all too well aware that we can scarcely dissociate our idea of Biscop from what Bede has chosen to tell us; there is a danger that we shall see the master only through the pupil's eyes. Yet we can, to some extent, check Bede's portrait against that of the anonymous biographer of Ceolfrid. It is also possible, by following the example of James Campbell in an important article, to set what we know in a wider European perspective; to clothe the frame of Bede's story with such ready-made tailoring as can be shown to fit it. This may help us to give Biscop a social and cultural context. In doing so, we shall cast necessary light on Bede's educational background.[1]

Bede speaks of Biscop's *semita regulari*. We may begin, therefore, with the rule of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow. It was one of Biscop's deathbed preoccupations, and it is in Bede's account of this famous scene that we read of how words which (according to the Anonymous) were often on Biscop's lips were spoken for the last time. The *decreta* which he had ordained for his monks were not his own untaught creation; they represented a selection of what he had found best in seventeen different monasteries which he had visited on his travels.[2] This rule is, of course, lost. But we are given an immediate clue to some at least of its contents when Biscop, in both accounts, compares his own plans for the succession to his abbeys with the *regula magni quondam abbatis Benedicti*.[3] Presumably because of this reference, it was taken for granted, forty years ago, that Biscop's rule was Benedictine. In the words

which Dom Cuthbert Butler quoted from Cardinal Newman: 'Bede is as truly the pattern of a Benedictine as is St Thomas of a Dominican.'[4] Today, thanks to the truly shattering revolution in monastic studies whose course was first charted by Dom David Knowles, we know better.[5]

No seventh-century monastery could be described as 'Benedictine' in quite the modern sense. In the seventh century, we are still in what is nowadays known as the age of the *regula mixta*.[6] This is not so much because the world had yet to awaken to the exclusive merits of St Benedict as because of a rather different attitude towards the codification of the monastic life. From the fourth to the eighth centuries, the primary meaning of the *Vita regularis* was the communal life of the apostolic Church, its model the description of the Jerusalem community in the fourth chapter of Acts. In the fourth century, however, it came to be felt that certain kinds of charismatic figure offered a Christian his best chance of following that model; by about 450, it had been established, both in the East and in the West, that one could get just as far by copying a holy man's example as by listening to his teaching.[7] The Rules ascribed (rightly or wrongly) to the founding fathers of the monastic life were increasingly considered to encapsulate such examples. It was from the corpus of sanctified tradition thus established that holy teachers, Benedict himself included, constructed their own patterns.[8] Thus, the writings of Cassian, the most influential of early western writers, seem to stand somewhere between a descriptive account of the Desert Fathers, a prescriptive rule for their western followers, and a verbatim record of their spiritual teaching. Thus, too, Pope Gregory the Great, in a famous passage, could recommend the rule of the holy father Benedict as a reliable guide to the abbot's life and character, 'for his life could not have differed from his teaching'.[9]

The sixth century was, however, an age of codifications. As bishops claimed the right to regulate the monastic communities of their dioceses, and as several noted monk-bishops legislated for their own foundations, rules throughout the western Mediterranean became increasingly similar in content and in language.[10] The seventh century was thus a period of transition. Monastic legislators now felt that they had very little of their own to add to the wisdom of the 'Fathers', and the extant rules are largely *catenae* of quotations.[11] Some sources seem to regard it as a point of credit that a holy man's rule should be indebted to the maximum number of earlier writers.[12] At the same time, the holy man retains some of his autonomy; monastic founders are still considered responsible for constructing their community's rule. The result of all this is that we can find a close, and probably revealing, parallel to Biscop's activity in the life of his Frankish contemporary, St Filibert of Noirmoutier. Filibert,

> because perfect men always follow the more perfect, began to travel around the communities of the saints, in order to acquire something profitable from the holy tradition. He passed Luxeuil and Bobbio in review, also the other monasteries living by the norm of St Columbanus, together with every monastery in France or Italy, which

> Burgundy folds within her lap. Keeping an astute eye open, like a most prudent bee, for whatever seemed to be flowering most vigorously, he selected it among his own models. He became familiar, by assiduous reading, with the inspiration of St Basil, the rule of Macarius, the decrees of Benedict, the most holy institutes of Columbanus, and thus, reeking with the scent of virtue, he displayed a holy example to his followers.[13]

This passage is from a rather later life, but it conveys a fair impression of the priorities of a seventh-century monastic founder. We can thus see why Bede will have considered his patron's rule an aspect of his charismatic example as a holy teacher. We can also guess that Biscop's circuit of seventeen monasteries is likely to have resulted in a digest of assorted earlier rules.

For these reasons, it is both possible and necessary to consider what elements could have contributed to the mixed rule under which Bede grew up. One constituent has already been isolated. What further contribution was made by the *Rule of St Benedict*? It may be that scholars have been reacting too powerfully against the traditional view.[14] At least two further chapters of the *Rule* are quoted by Bede.[15] The immortal story of the plague at Jarrow in the anonymous life of Ceolfrid may conceal further evidence. For Ceolfrid's initial reaction to the destruction of his community was to order that antiphons should cease, except in the evening and at matins. Now *RB* cap. 17 says that antiphons are to be abandoned if the congregation is small, and seems to be referring only to the services of terce, sext and nones.[16] Ultimately, Ceolfrid reversed his decision (as the rule itself entitled him to), but not before the reader had been given a very significant glimpse of the norm.[17] What, moreover, of Biscop's *cognomen*? Benedict is not a common seventh-century name north of the Alps; when Bede cites Gregory's *Dialogues* in the first chapter of the 'History of the Abbots', he hints powerfully at the source of Biscop's inspiration.[18] A final point: the view that Bede and Biscop were Benedictines could prove to be one of those errors whose very existence is a signpost to subsequent commentators. For very little of what we can find out about Monkwearmouth-Jarrow is actually incompatible with the Benedictine *Rule*.[19] St Wilfrid, by contrast, whose claims to be an orthodox Benedictine are often nowadays preferred to Biscop's, ignored the *Rule*'s provisions for the succession and adopted an attitude to oblates more characteristic of Gallic than of Benedictine monasticism.[20] The fact that his pupil, St Aethelthryth, failed to fast on festivals is a further hint of Gallic influence.[21] It would seem, then, that one of Biscop's legacies to Bede could have been as concentrated a dose of Benedictinism as was available anywhere in the seventh century.

The other components of Biscop's rule are irretrievable. There is, as Mr Hunter Blair has pointed out, a strong probability that it will have been influenced by the customs of Lérins where, between 665 and 668, Biscop was finally tonsured;[22] but these customs are themselves obscure.[23] I shall return to the possible influence of Lérins in other spheres later. Meanwhile, I would like to point out that this is a very

significant and controversial period in the history of the island monastery. At some
date between 660 and 680, Aigulf arrived from Fleury-sur-Loire to reform the abbey
along the lines of the mixed Benedictine and Columbanian observance forged by the
great Hiberno-Frankish monastery of Luxeuil. His innovations were so unpopular
that, not without cooperation from the local bishop, he and his protégés were
massacred.[24] It is not clear just where Biscop's visit fits into this pattern of events.[25]
But the story has clear implications for our understanding of the influences upon
him. First, if he arrived at an unreformed Lérins, he is most unlikely to have
acquired there his high regard for the *Rule of St Benedict*. The older houses of the
Rhône valley were highly resistant to reform, Benedictine or otherwise, throughout
most of the seventh century. Secondly, the inspiration to reform was reaching Lérins
not from Italy but from the north.[26] We thus reach a further set of questions about
Biscop's rule. Where is the founder of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow most likely to have
learned to admire St Benedict?

To this question one may return a short, and possibly correct, answer: he got the
Rule from Wilfrid. Bishop Wilfrid, Ceolfrid's ex-abbot and Biscop's diocesan, must
have been a major influence upon Monkwearmouth-Jarrow in its early years;[27] and
he is of course reported to have introduced the *Rule* to Northumbria, more probably
on his return to Ripon in 666 than earlier.[28] But such an answer scarcely moves the
inquiry forward. What lay behind Wilfrid? The answer that will this time spring to
the lips is Rome. Yet not the least of the shocks that modern research has reserved for
the harassed historians of monasticism is that the early dissemination of the *Rule*
owed much less to Rome than to an environment where we might least have
expected to find it: the large network of north Gallic and Burgundian monasteries
which drew their inspiration from St Columbanus' Luxeuil and much of their
prosperity from official patronage. After an isolated, and still unexplained, appear-
ance in south-western Gaul, the continuous history of the *Rule* began, not at Rome,
where it is extraordinarily difficult to find evidence for its early observance, but at
the Neustrian court.[29] It was under the joint patronage of Saints Benedict and
Columbanus that the monastic movement exploded in northern and eastern Gaul.[30]
(It may be noted that Luxeuil and its founder are given special emphasis in the
odyssey of St Filibert.) Then, as the seventh century drew to a close, St Benedict's
name began to appear unaccompanied.[31]

In the light of these points, the Frankish connections of Wilfrid and Biscop
acquire a further significance. Wilfrid is unlikely to have discovered St Benedict at
Lyons for the reasons described above. But he spent up to two further years in Gaul,
during and after his consecration (664–6), and it may have been then that he
adopted the *Rule*.[32] One of his probable hosts, his patron Acgilbert, apparently
belonged to the Columbanian connection, and Acgilbert's abbey of Jouarre, if
Wilfrid stayed there, must have observed the joint rule.[33] Even if Wilfrid returned
to Lyons, he will, by this date, have found a reforming bishop in office; for Genesius
was a protégé of Queen Balthildis, who had refounded Chelles with nuns from

Jouarre, and it was at Chelles that Genesius was buried.[34] Biscop himself had his links with these circles. In the winter of 668–9, on his way home from Rome with Theodore and Hadrian, he must have spent five months either with Acgilbert himself or with Emmo of Sens and Burgundofaro of Meaux.[35] Burgundofaro was as closely tied to the Luxeuil connection as was Acgilbert, while Emmo was at least a patron of the joint rule.[36] There is a final point to make here. Biscop had close and early links with Wessex, quite apart from his relations with Acgilbert. It was in Wessex that he planned to found his monastery, before his ultimate return to Northumbria.[37] Obscure as early West Saxon history is, two things about it are quite clear. In the first place, Frankish influence must have been extremely strong; the bishop under whom Biscop planned to settle in 672 would have been Acgilbert's cousin, Hlothere, who subscribed the only early charter with unimpeachable Frankish features.[38] Secondly, Wessex is an early and much-neglected outpost of Benedictine influence in Britain. St Aldhelm claimed to live by the *Rule*. St Boniface, with his shadowy West Saxon background, was the most important single figure in the history of the *Rule* between St Benedict himself and his Carolingian namesake.[39] I suspect myself that there is something unusual about the attitude of some Englishmen to the *Rule of St Benedict*, and that it is linked with their veneration for Pope Gregory and their interest in his *Dialogues*. Nonetheless, we must now acknowledge that their probably extensive knowledge of the *Rule* connects Biscop and Wilfrid not so much with Rome as with northern France. For all their long experiences of the Midi, they find their counterparts in the Frankish and Burgundian noblemen, whose first inclinations were towards the older communities of the south, but who were soon drawn into the orbit of Luxeuil.[40]

An even more striking illustration of this paradox (if paradox it really be) could prove to be the papal charter of privilege with which Biscop equipped his foundations; it was another of his main concerns as he lay dying.[41] Once again, it has been lost. But once again, one may make a reasoned guess at its contents, with Wilhelm Levison as an authoritative and well-tried guide.[42] In doing so, there are two considerations, as Levison could see, which are of primary importance. The first is that Biscop's charter be set against the background of normal diplomatic practice, papal and episcopal, during the seventh century. We cannot realistically suppose that his charter will have been of a type unrecorded at any time elsewhere. Secondly, it can hardly be coincidence that Hadrian, Wilfrid and Biscop all secured privileges from the same pope at what may very well have been the same time.[43] (The Monkwearmouth-Jarrow privilege, like that of Wilfrid, was subsequently confirmed by Benedict II and Sergius I.) The links between Biscop and Wilfrid have already been noticed more than once. Those between Monkwearmouth and Canterbury are too obvious to need further comment.[44] Thus there is a much better than even chance that we shall be able to reconstruct significant features of Biscop's charter from the evidence of Eddius and from the substantially genuine text of Hadrian's privilege, especially with continental analogies to guide our judgement.[45]

In the first place, Monkwearmouth-Jarrow sources tell us that the abbey's privilege and its confirmations guaranteed the freedom of abbatial elections from outside interference. Hadrian's charter contains a similar provision.[46] From Eddius, we learn that Wilfrid's charter protected the properties and revenues of his *regnum ecclesiarum*, excluded alien interference, and obstructed the conversion of Ripon into an episcopal see.[47] There is nothing in any of this that is at variance with canonical norms.[48] However, the St Augustine's privilege also shuts out the jurisdiction of any Church but the apostolic See; unless it is requested by the abbot, no ceremony may be performed in the abbey. At least from Sergius' time, moreover, Wilfrid's charter apparently invoked the disciplinary authority of the pope alone.[49] Finally, though Bishops John and Acca of Hexham are known to have officiated at Monkwearmouth-Jarrow, this was by invitation only; Ceolfrid did not seek his diocesan's permission to depart as St Boniface was to do, and as canon law demanded.[50] These are all indications that Biscop's charter belonged to a new class of monastic privilege.

The early history of monastic exemptions has been complicated by their great subsequent importance. Historians have, on the whole, failed to appreciate that we cannot expect the juristic precision of the post-Cluniac age in the world of the Vulgar Law. The truth is that canonical sources vary in the emphasis that they give, from one local tradition to another and from one class of document to the next.[51] The situation remains fluid to the point of embarrassment.[52] But the fundamental position is clear enough. Monasteries were normally protected from tampering with their property, from interference in their elections, and from large-scale ceremonial in their churches. Diocesan bishops, on the other hand, retained their sacramental monopoly, from the ordination of the abbot to the blessing of chrism, and they remained responsible for the good discipline of a monastery; in effect, therefore, they could vet a community's choice of ruler. This position is obscured only by the differing emphases of the sources. The canons of the Merovingian councils and, perhaps significantly, the early English sources too, emphasize the rights of the bishop to the point of apparent tyranny.[53] The privileges of Pope Gregory the Great, for their part, grant not so much exemption as protection from the abuse of episcopal power;[54] and there is a class of papal privilege in the early English Church, like that of Pope Constantine for Bermondsey and Woking, which is less concerned to change the jurisdictional situation than to guarantee the status quo.[55]

It now seems clear, however, that the seventh century saw new departures in monastic exemption. The relevant formulae of the Liber Diurnus remove all sacerdotal *dicio* from a community in favour of Petrine jurisdiction; no masses may be said except by invitation.[56] These formulae are first known to have been used in the charter of Pope Honorius for Bobbio (628); Jonas of Susa considered that they excluded the diocesan authority altogether.[57] Very similar formulae are used in Pope Agatho's charter for St Augustine's, Canterbury. Meanwhile, Pope Theodore's confirmation of the Bobbio privilege spelt out its implications in great, if

occasionally anachronistic, detail: monks were entitled to a choice of officiating bishop, whenever one was called for; failure in an abbot's authority was to result in immediate papal discipline.[58] At the same period in France, as a classic study by Professor Ewig showed, the functions of the diocesan were being either removed or limited by the bishops themselves. Their disciplinary duties were taken over, in some cases, by a college of abbots following a similar rule, or by the head of the monastic family.[59] A decisive indication that something had changed is supplied by the privilege of Pope Adeodatus for Tours (c.676) – the sole surviving papal charter from seventh-century Gaul which is of unquestionable authenticity, but one 'which there is no reason to consider exceptional'.[60] The pope was uneasy that religious places should be removed from a bishop's regimen, but he agreed to abide by the generous example of the Gallic episcopate. Returning, therefore, to Biscop's charter, we should remember that Hadrian's privilege resembles that of Pope Honorius for Bobbio, and that Wilfrid's seems to have involved direct papal authority, as Bobbio's did.[61] The suggestion is then that Biscop belonged to a monastic movement whose primary concern was that episcopal power over monks should, in some respects, be limited. In the pre-Cluniac age, this fact of limitation was more important than the papal nature of the guarantee. Now, as Levison saw, there is something very suggestive about the context in which these developments originated. Whether in France or Italy, Irish influence seems to stand somewhere in the background, even if it be possible to exaggerate its long-term influence.[62] The papal series began at Bobbio. The episcopal charters of Gaul are granted by and for the members of the connection of Luxeuil. The paradox of Biscop's rule is thus repeated. From what we know of the Monkwearmouth-Jarrow charter of privilege, it seems that even so 'Roman' a treasure as this may have found its analogues in the Irish-influenced circles of Francia and Lombardy. It may not, once again, be coincidence that both Burgundofaro and Emmo granted extensive exemptions, while Acgilbert's Jouarre was almost certainly a privileged community.[63] It may also be noted that Biscop visited Tours on his way home with his charter in 679–80.[64] It looks, in short, as though Biscop got more from Gaul than glaziers, architects and a few books. If I were looking for the mysterious Torhthelm, it is in these circles that I would search.[65]

  These, of course, are no more than probabilities, though they are the probabilities dictated by the distribution of the continental evidence. As probabilities, however, they set up a shocking contrast with the impression of Biscop's horizons that is given by Bede. In Bede's view, it is Rome and almost only Rome that counts in the making of Biscop; the Gallic episodes are asides and afterthoughts. The image of Pope Gregory, above all, seems to dominate the atmosphere at Monkwearmouth-Jarrow and perhaps inspires its air of *gravitas*.[66] How, then, are we to reconcile a Roman orientation which is manifest both in Biscop's biographies and in his rule and charter, with the fact that its closest parallels seem to lie in the barbarian north? Largely, I suggest, by thinking in terms not so much of Gallic influences as of

analogies in Gaul. We must recognize that Biscop is one of many seventh-century figures on the circumference of a circle, whose centre is a powerful Roman magnet. The Frankish contemporaries of Biscop and Wilfrid can now be seen to have shared some at least of their attraction to Rome.[67] It would not, then, be surprising if they had marginally affected the direction of his interests.

A final illustration of these shared enthusiasms is furnished by a third of Biscop's deathbed anxieties, his book collection.[68] For Bede's patron was only the most successful of the northern noblemen who plundered the libraries of Italy and southern France for their treasures in this period. Saints Amand, Gertrude and Audoin – all major figures in the new monasticism of Gaul, and all, one might add, more or less familiar with the *Rule of St Benedict* – each sought books from Rome.[69] In the central volumes of *Codices Latini Antiquiores*, one may detect a steady drift of manuscripts northwards for some time before 750. By about this date, the great royal abbey of Corbie in Picardy had established the nucleus of a collection comparable with that of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow.[70] Like Monkwearmouth-Jarrow, it had books from Vivarium.[71] Significantly, it already possessed at least one, and possibly both, of the ancient Italian *codices regularum*, which contain the *Regula Magistri*.[72] The library of the Venerable Bede can be paralleled in scope if we are prepared to add together the evidence of surviving manuscripts from identified north French *scriptoria*; this is a comparison which is bound to flatter the English house, with its Bedan maestro.[73] These parallels exist because, all over northern Europe, similar stimuli are at work in a similar environment. Southern culture is being sucked into the vacuum created by the awakening interest of barbarian aristocracies in the legacy of the ancient Christian Mediterranean. The achievements of the Northumbrian Church are thus part of a 'wider upsurge'.[74] The 'Cinderella' seventh century can now be considered every bit as important for the Carolingian 'Renaissance' as are the thirteenth and fourteenth for the Italian.[75]

My concern thus far has been to show that Biscop is, after all, the man of his age. Yet there is both more and less to the career of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow's founder than this. Consider once again the many similarities between Biscop and Wilfrid. In outline, their careers have much in common. Both were the products of the Irish mission in Northumbria, though both gravitated early towards the *Romani*. Both set out before 664 for Rome and were subjected to two or three years of southern French culture. Both brought back ideas about the regulation and security of the monastic life that are 'Roman' in origin and appearance but which may have been transmitted through Gallic circles. Both had a taste for art and architecture *more Romanorum*. Both were aristocrats – what German scholars call *Adelsheilige*. Biscop could be said to have emerged, like many Frankish contemporaries, from the *Schola Palatii*.[76] But it would scarcely be necessary to remind you of these parallels were there not also some startling differences. If, moreover, one is prepared to take a European perspective, it is Wilfrid who is much the closer to seventh-century type. Like many Merovingian saints, Wilfrid combines monastic profession with

a bishopric. He is a major political figure, if not quite so obviously involved with governing circles as some Frankish contemporaries.[77] His biographer mentions twenty-three kings and four queens; several he describes as Wilfrid's *amici*. We also hear of relations with the secular aristocracy.[78] Dr Kirby has reminded us that Wilfrid and his followers were figures of major importance in the dissemination of the cult of Oswald.[79] Wilfrid was himself a miracle-worker. Biscop, by contrast, was never a bishop and was never a thaumaturge; one would like to know why not. The seven kings that feature in his biography exist almost solely as suppliers of endowment or as ex-employers; of secular nobles outside the monastery one hears nothing.[80] For what the point is worth, Bede's martyrology has no entry for Oswald, though the calendar of Ripon-educated Willibrord certainly does.[81] That a hagiographer's views reflect those of his hero is never, of course, a safe assumption. But Biscop's Lives, like Wilfrid's, emerge from his own community comparatively soon after his death. In any assessment of these two monastic paladins it may, therefore, be significant that, for all the obvious links between Monkwearmouth and the Northumbrian court, the *Vitae* of its abbots present us with an impression of relative isolation and detachment; Eddius, on the other hand, gives us a saint who seems to share many of the interests and values of aristocratic society in the Northumbria of the time.[82] Why should this be? What does it mean?

To some extent the Lives of Biscop and Ceolfrid belong to an older style of hagiographical writing: one where renunciation of the world is actually reflected in the scarcity of biographical information supplied, and where sanctity is confirmed not by signs and wonders but by personal virtues and affecting death-scenes.[83] This type of biography was particularly well established in the great and early days of Lérins.[84] The standard was set by Hilary of Arles who, in his encomium on Honoratus, the founder of Lérins, steadfastly refused to say a word about his hero's background and specifically dismissed the miraculous as irrelevant to his greatness.[85] In accounting, therefore, for the mysterious lack of miracles in the Lives of the Monkwearmouth abbots, we should not exclude the possibility that Biscop and Ceolfrid were uninterested in being remembered by them.[86] Alternatively, we might choose to say that, in this respect, Biscop's communities were simply behind the times. Southern France as a whole was an old-fashioned sort of place in the seventh century, and one recalls that, by Carl Nordenfalk's canon, the *Codex Amiatinus* is still a Late Antique type of book.[87]

But Biscop's idiosyncrasies must be more than a matter of a touch of southern sun. Wilfrid, after all, spent three years at Lyons. Several of the most important Merovingian saints actually came from the south, especially from Aquitaine.[88] It is time, in fact, to abandon our talk of cultural influences and to consider the possibilities of a more directly spiritual inspiration. The splendid homily with which Bede assessed his founder's virtues becomes valuable evidence here. Unlike the biographies, it contains the considered and explicit judgement of a gifted pupil on his master's true significance. Bede saw Biscop as the rich young man of the

Gospels, who had asked what he must do to be saved.[89] Unlike his biblical prototype, thought Bede, the wealthy and nobly born Biscop had fulfilled Christ's commandment. He had left house, brothers, sisters, father, mother, wife, children and estates for Christ's sake. His hundredfold reward had been paid even in this life. For obvious reasons, this text was particularly appealing to the barbarian aristocracies of the early Middle Ages. It is a hagiographical commonplace, a *peregrinatio* text which is often used in conjunction with God's command to Abraham in the Book of Genesis.[90] Its impact on the world of early Irish Christianity is well known.[91] Now when Bede uses the word *peregrinatio* or its cognates, he always means foreign travel.[92] But, in his homily, he gives the Matthaean text a more general significance. For Biscop remained a pilgrim in spirit, after he had ceased to be one in fact. He had abandoned his kindred; the result was veneration at home as well as abroad. He had renounced his estates; in exchange, he had received lavish hospitality overseas and endowment for his monasteries in his native land. He had scorned the prospect of wife and children; he had founded a spiritual family, one hundred times greater. These, says Bede, are Biscop's *spiritalia gesta*; this, he declares (in a possible echo of Hilary), is the real miracle that God had wrought in Biscop.[93] It is of the essence of *peregrinatio* in the early Middle Ages that one should lose the solace and security of one's kindred. Bede's point is that Biscop has achieved the requisite social dislocation in the entirely stable environment of the monastery. A 'fugitive' had actually become a 'cloistered virtue'.[94]

Bede's assessment of Biscop is one of the most powerful elaborations of a familiar theme in early medieval hagiography. Moreover, its perspective is supported by various considerations. First, there is the general agreement of the two Lives of Biscop in giving an impression of a figure detached from Anglo-Saxon society. In the Anonymous, we even catch a glimpse of aristocratic reaction to the austere discipline imposed by Biscop and his deputy; perhaps their standards were exceptional, although such stories are not uncommon.[95]

Second, there is the greatest of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow products, Bede apart, the *Codex Amiatinus*. One has only to set this masterpiece alongside the strictly contemporary Lindisfarne Gospels for the insular touches which betrayed to Lowe and to Dr Bruce-Mitford the wholly English origin of the book to be put in their true perspective.[96] This is not just a comparison between an Italian book and an insular one, nor even between a Late Antique manuscript and one which heralds the Middle Ages. It is also a contrast between a technique and an artistic repertoire which revel in what contemporary secular culture has to offer, and one which does all it can to cover its tracks.[97] Now that we all know where this colossal book originated, it might be instructive to remember how difficult this was to find out.

There may even, third, be something significant in the discrepancy between the comparatively paltry number of small finds thus far unearthed at Monkwearmouth and Jarrow, and the wealth of knick-knacks revealed by the great royal abbey of Whitby.[98] Nobody, of course, is going to deny any longer that the culture of Biscop's

monasteries was marginally influenced by insular styles, still less that they had a major impact of their own on Northumbrian art as a whole.[99] There are good grounds, in any case, for supposing that the atmosphere was changing as the eighth century advanced.[100] Nonetheless, the limited nature of the insular contribution in the abbey's early years seems to tell its own story.

Fourth, and above all, there is Biscop's attitude to the succession. Despite the injunctions of innumerable monastic legislators, the claims of a founder's kindred to succeed him as abbot were widely recognized in more than just the Celtic world of the early Middle Ages.[101] Extremely few barbarian noblemen devoted their dying breaths to the explicit exclusion of their family from the succession to their abbacy. Yet this is the last and, for Bede, perhaps the most important of Biscop's dying injunctions. Once again, it brings him into contrast with Wilfrid. It cannot merely be that Biscop's brother was uniquely wicked.[102] His attitude to his kindred is of a piece with his concept of the monastic vocation as a sort of pilgrimage. So it is that this thoroughly 'Roman' figure achieved a new variation upon an idea normally associated with the Irish. The isolation of his monasteries from the world had its sociological and cultural dimensions.

Two conclusions follow. First, the pupil's portrait of his master is, essentially, a faithful likeness. We can suspect that Bede exaggerates and intensifies the tendencies of his founder. Pupils usually do. We can perhaps measure the difference between ideal and reality in Bede's treatment of the anonymous Life of Ceolfrid. Bede ignores a significant detail about Biscop's contacts in Gaul;[103] he suppresses the sole concession to the miraculous.[104] Most interesting, Bede makes no mention of Biscop's frequent summons to advise the king, and thus ascribes a false explanation to the appointment of Eosterwine.[105] The result of this editorial work is an even more totally consistent view of the abbots of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow, with their admiration for Rome, their estrangement from the *saeculum*, their lack of concern with the miraculous. But these two Lives are much more like one another than either is like Eddius. We may conclude that ideal and reality were not far removed either; that Bede has not distorted his patron's character.

Second, therefore, Biscop had influenced Bede. Bede's horizons are very like those of the *Codex Amiatinus*, with its meticulous and eclectic scholarship, its ultramontane models and its lack of contact with the tastes of the Northumbrian world outside the monastery.[106] The preoccupations that dominated Biscop's last hours, which I have made the framework of my communication, are Bede's preoccupations too. The preservation of a learned tradition; the commitment to the works of Rome (and especially to the memory of Pope Gregory); the regulation of the monastic life; above all, the protection of its integrity from the encroachments of the world: these were some of the central concerns in Bede's life. Of course, they are not original, nor were they unique in Bede's time. But I think I detect a certain single-mindedness in Biscop's adoption of each of these principles, and this thoroughness, too, he passed on to his disciple.

One of the advantages of considering early English history in the widest possible continental context is that one then sees not only what is (often surprisingly) similar, but also what is significantly different. By looking briefly at Benedict Biscop against the background of his age, I have sought to show that much of what is frequently singled out as most remarkable about him is not so very unusual after all. As bibliophile, builder, monastic legislator and papal protégé, Biscop had his continental counterparts. Any differences that there are might be better described as differences of degree rather than of kind. What does, then, emerge as remarkable is not his interest in Rome and the Mediterranean, but the extent to which this interest remained relatively unmodified by the values of the real aristocratic world around him. So it is with Bede. Bede is much admired for his learning and his common sense.[107] But I do not think that he would be quite so important had he been merely the most learned man of his age; he would certainly not be so difficult had he been simply a man of good sense. Bede's dynamic was neither learning nor common sense, but idealism. It was idealism which dictated his conception of the past, just as it coloured his opinion of the present. As a historian, the most extraordinary thing about him is not that he doesn't tell us about society; unlike Eddius and some Frankish and Lombard writers, he hardly even reflects it. In this communication, I have been trying to suggest that Bede's idealism may have owed almost as much to the monastic atmosphere created by his founder as did his learning to Biscop's library. I believe that Monkwearmouth and Jarrow had a role to play in the evolution of a *History* that is much more than a factual record: it is also a vision of timeless grace and power.

NOTES

1   Citations of Bede's *HE*, HA and the anonymous VC are from Plummer; of Bede's homily on Biscop (Hom.) from *Bedae Opera Homiletica*, ed. D. Hurst (CCSL cxxii (III)) 13, pp. 88–94 (opening quotation, p. 93 lines 165–7). The accounts of Bede and the Anonymous were carefully compared by G. Isenberg: *Die Würdigung Wilfrieds von York in der Historia Gentis Anglorum Bedas und der Vita Wilfridi des Eddius* (Weidenau, 1978). On the European context, J. Campbell, 'The first century of Christianity in England', *Ampleforth Journal* LXXVI (1971), pp. 12–29, reprinted in Campbell, *Essays*, pp. 49–67, remains absolutely fundamental. Of the several teachers and friends who helped me prepare this paper, I am especially grateful to these two. For Professor Whitelock's paper and others much to the point, see *Famulus Christi*, where this paper first appeared.
2   HA 11, pp. 374–5; VC 6, p. 390; cf. Hom., pp. 91–2 lines 116–20.
3   HA 11, p. 375; VC 16, p. 393; cf. *RB* lxiv.2, II, p. 648.
4   A. Hamilton Thompson, 'Northumbrian Monasticism', in *Bede*, ed. Thompson, pp. 60–101, at pp. 83–6; C. Butler, *Benedictine Monachism* (2nd edn, London, 1924), p. 336.
5   M. D. Knowles, 'The Regula Magistri and the Rule of St Benedict', in his *Great Historical Enterprises* (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 139–95; 'Some recent work on early Benedictine

history', in C. W. Dugmore and C. Duggan (eds), *Studies in Church History I* (Cambridge, 1964), pp. 35–46.

6   The now classic breakthrough is K. Hallinger, 'Papst Gregor der Grosse und der hl. Benedikt', *Studia Anselmiana* XLII, ed. B. Steidle (Rome, 1957), pp. 231–319. The best of more traditional accounts is perhaps A. Zimmermann, 'Die Ausbreitung der Regula S. Benedicti in den ersten Jahrhunderten ihrer Geltung', *Kalendarium Benediktinum* (3 vols, Brussels, 1933), I, pp. xxxv–lxxxii. For a reassessment of the English evidence in the aftermath of the earthquake, M. Deanesly, *St Augustine of Canterbury* (London, 1964), pp. 134–50, and E. John, 'The Social and Economic Problems of the Early English Church', in J. Thirsk (ed.) *Land, Church and People: Essays Presented to H. P. R. Finberg* (Reading, 1970), pp. 39–63, at pp. 54–6.

7   Compare P. R. L. Brown, 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity', *JRS* LXI (1971), pp. 80–101, reprinted in his *Society and the Holy*, pp. 103–52; and P. Rousseau, 'The Spiritual Authority of the Monk-Bishop', *JThS* NS XXII (1971), pp. 380–419; with the fundamental studies of A. de Vogüé, 'La Monastère, église de Christ', *Studia Anselmiana* XLII, ed. Steidle (1957), pp. 25–46; *La Communauté et l'Abbé dans la Règle de Saint Benoît* (Paris, 1960), esp. pp. 120–76; 'Sub Regula vel Abbate', *Collectanea Cisterciana* XXXIII (1971), pp. 209–41; and his introduction to *Benoît* I, pp. 29–79.

8   De Vogüé, 'Sub Regula', pp. 220–7. For vivid illustrations of this phase, see *La Vie des Pères du Jura*, ed. F. Martine (Sources Chrétiennes 142, Paris, 1968), 4, 11–12, 174, 179, pp. 242–3, 250–3, 426–9, 432–5; and the views of F. Masai, 'La "Vita Patrum Iurensium" et les débuts du monachisme à Saint Maurice d'Agaune', in J. Autenrieth and F. Brünhölzl (eds), *Festschrift Bernhardt Bischoff zum 65. Geburtstag* (Munich, 1971), pp. 43–69; *Regula Pauli et Stephani* 41, ed. J. Vilanova (Scripta et Documenta 11, Montserrat, 1959), p. 124; Regula Isidori Pr. (*PL* CIII, cols 555–7). See also A. Mundo, 'Il Monachesimo nella penisola iberica', *Sett. Spol.* IV (1957), pp. 94–9.

9   *Cassian, De Institutis Coenobiorum*, ed. M. Petschenig (CSEL XVII, 1888), Pr., iv 40–1, pp. 4–6, 76–7; *Conlationes*, ed. Petschenig (CSEL XIII, 1883), xviii 1–6, pp. 506–13; *Gregorii Magni Dialogi*, ed. U. Morica (Fonti per la Storia d'Italia 57, Rome, 1924), ii 36, p. 132 (trans. O. Zimmermann, Fathers of the Church 39, Washington, DC, 1959, p. 107).

10 G. Holzherr, *Regula Ferioli* (Einsiedeln, 1961), pp. 11, 35–9, 100–1, 110–29. The codificatory tendencies of the *Zeitgeist* were rightly stressed by John Chapman in his now discredited arguments from the phenomena which misled him: *Saint Benedict and the Sixth Century* (London, 1929), pp. 29–33. They help to account for episcopal initiatives: Mundo, 'Monachesimo', pp. 94–5, and 'Les anciens synodes abbatiaux et les Regulae SS. Patrum', *Studia Anselmiana* XLIV, ed. B. Steidle (Rome, 1959), pp. 107–25.

11 For an early example, the (as such) unpublished Florilegium in Paris BN MS. lat. 12634, see A. de Vogüé, 'Nouveaux aperçus sur une règle monastique du VIe siècle', *Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique* XLI (1965), pp. 19–54, and 'La règle d'Eugippe retrouvée?', ibid. XLVII (1971), pp. 233–65. A well-known but under-studied seventh-century example, much indebted both to St Benedict and also to Saints Caesarius and Columbanus, is Regula Donati (*PL* LXXXVII, 267–98). The misleading and inaccurate analysis of C. de Clercq, *La législation religieuse franque de Clovis à Charlemagne* (2 vols, Louvain, 1936), I, pp. 85–8, has had undue influence upon subsequent commentators. A further

study is now available in G. Moyse, 'Les origines du monachisme dans le diocèse de Besançon', *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 131 (1973), pp. 21–104, 369–485, at pp. 95–100, 397–426.

12   *Gregory of Tours, Libri Historiarum*, ed. B. Krusch and W. Levison (MGH, SRM I), x 29, p. 523: 'Non modo Cassiani, verum etiam Basilii vel reliquorum abbatum . . .'; cf. ibid. ix 40, pp. 464–5, for the adoption by St Rhadegundis's convent at Poitiers of the Rule of St Caesarius for nuns.

13   Vita Filiberti, ed. W. Levison (MGH, SRM V), 5, p. 587. For the date, Wattenbach–Levison, *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter*, I, p. 138. For the 'topos' of the Bee in this context, cf. Holzherr (ed.), *Regula Ferioli*, pp. 52–3. For an illuminating reflection of the results of such rule-collecting, see *Gesta Abbatum Fontanellensium*, ed. G. H. Pertz (MGH, SS II), 13, p. 287; Corbie had a copy of the Rule of St Basil in the eighth century, to judge from *CLA* XI 1598.

14   See the very cautious assessment by P. Hunter Blair, *The World of Bede* (London 1970), pp. 197–201.

15   *RB* xlvi.1, *Benoît*, II, p. 594, in HA 8, p. 371, as noted by H. Farmer (ed.), *The Rule of St Benedict* (EEMSF XV, 1968), p. 24, n. 5; *RB* vii.7–9, I, 472–3, in *In Ezram et Nehemiam*, ed. D. Hurst (CCSL CXIXA), iii, lines 466–73, as noted by M. L. W. Laistner, 'The Library of the Venerable Bede', in *Bede*, ed. Thompson, pp. 251–2.

16   VC 14, p. 393; *RB* xvii.5–6, *Benoît*, II, p. 526; and, for the abbot's freedom of manoeuvre, xviii.22–3, II, p. 534; cf. de Vogüé's commentary, V, pp. 529–33. Perhaps a similar explanation lies behind a later scene at Biscop's deathbed, HA 12, p. 376. No other monastic rule known to me contains this provision.

17   It may be noted that his clauses on the liturgy were not the most popular of Benedict's provisions in seventh-century 'regulae mixtae': they are totally ignored by that of Donatus. Thus, their use at Monkwearmouth-Jarrow seems to argue an unusual interest in the application of the Rule.

18   HA 1, p. 364; cf. *Greg., Dial.*, ed. Moricca, ii Pr., p. 71: 'Gratia Benedictus et nomine'. I must acknowledge that the pope during Biscop's last visit to Rome was Benedict II (684–5). But why should he wait until his last visit before naming himself after a pope? Why not take the name of his benefactor, Agatho? Or Martin, a papal hero of the period, whose exile immediately preceded Biscop's first arrival in Rome (653), and whose Lateran Decrees (649) he brought back to his library, *HE* iv 18, p. 242?

19   Farmer, *Rule of St Benedict*, p. 24, argues that Biscop's fear of hereditary succession, which is known to have been common in Ireland, constitutes evidence of the eclectic nature of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow observance. But the pressure for hereditary succession was a function of Germanic society, not of Celtic influence, and its manifestations were not confined to Celtic lands; see E. John, '*Saecularium Prioratus* and the Rule of St Benedict', *Rev. Bn.* LXXV (1965), pp. 212–39 at p. 225, and below, n. 102. Moreover, Biscop is not only resisting such pressure; he is even citing the Rule in doing so!

20   *Vit. Wilf.* 14, 47, 63, pp. 209, 242, 259; *HE* iv 16, p. 237. *RB* lix.1–2, *Benoît*, II, p. 632, makes no stipulation that oblates are to have reached the age of seven before they are admitted; Wilfrid's postponement of admission to seven in c. 18, pp. 213–14, coupled with his ruthless attitude subsequently, recalls Caesarius' Rule, *Sancti Caesarii Opera*, ed. G. Morin (Maretioli, 1942), vii, II, p. 104; cf. de Vogüé, *Benoît*, VI, pp. 1355–68. Bede,

of course, was not recruited until he was seven, but there is no evidence that this was de rigueur at Biscop's foundations.

21 *HE* iv 19, p. 244; *RB* xli, *Benoît*, II, pp. 580–2, has no objection to fasting on festivals. Elsewhere, however, see Pachomii Praecepta, ed. A. Boon, *Pachomiana Latina* (Louvain, 1932), clix. p. 58; echoed by Regula Orientalis xvii (*PL* CIII, 479); Regula Caesarii ad Virgines, ed. Morin, lxvii, p. 121; Regula Isidori ii (*PL* CIII, 565); and *Regula Magistri* xxviii.37–46, ed. A. de Vogüé, *La Règle du Maître* (3 vols, Sources Chrétiennes 105–7, Paris, 1964), II, pp. 158–9; of especial interest is Regula cuiusdam Patris ad Virgines xi (*PL* LXXXVIII, 1063), since this rule has been plausibly connected with Luxeuil and Faremoutiers, and St Aethelthryth's family was closely linked with Faremoutiers: *HE* iii 8, iv 19, pp. 142, 243–4; L. Gougaud, 'Inventaire des règles monastiques irlandaises', *Rev. Bn*. XXV (1908), 167–84, 321–33, at pp. 328–30.

22 HA 2, pp. 365–6; Hunter Blair, *World of Bede*, p. 157.

23 Reg. Caes. ad Virg., ed. Morin, lxvi–lxx, pp. 120–2, and thus Aurelian's Rules (*PL* LXVIII, 393–6, 403–6) claim to take their liturgical practices from Lérins. There are grounds for ascribing the Regula Macarii (*PL* CIII, 447–51), which was investigated by St Filibert, to Lérins, but it bears no obvious resemblance to what we know of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow, and its cellular structure (vi, xiii, xxi, xxiv) runs contrary to the evidence for Biscop's monasteries; cf. de Vogüé, *Benoît*, V, pp. 664–97. On the possible Lérins provenance of other rules in this series, see Mundo, 'Les anciens synodes abbatiaux'; Masai, 'La Vita Patrum Iurensium'; J. Neufville, 'Regula IV Patrum et Regula Patrum II', *Rev. Bn* LXXVII (1967), pp. 47–106; and A. de Vogüé, 'La Vie des Pères du Jura et la datation de la Regula Orientalis', *Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique* XLVII (1971), pp. 121–7. See also below, n. 26.

24 Vita Aigulfi, *Acta Sanctorum*, Sept. (3rd), I, 743–7. This Life is probably eighth-century in date, but there seems no reason to challenge the story, which is no more than an unusually violent manifestation of a common reaction. Compare the scenes on Lindisfarne in *Two Lives of St Cuthbert*, ed. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1940), Anon. iii 1, pp. 94–7, Bede's xvi, xl, pp. 208–13, 286–7.

25 P. Visentin, 'La posizione di S. Beda . . . riguardo alla tradizione del corpo di S. Benedetto', *Rev. Bn*. LXVII (1957), pp. 34–48, argues that since Bede's martyrology makes no reference to the translation of St Benedict's bones to Fleury, the translation cannot have happened when Biscop was at Lérins, and may never have happened at all. Equally, it may mean that Biscop was at Lérins before Aigulf arrived.

26 F. Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum im Frankenreich* (Munich, 1965), pp. 147–9, 276–8, 286–90. A possible difficulty in this thesis would arise if a south Gallic origin for the *Regula Magistri* and the Regula IV Patrum could be definitely established; see Holzherr, *Regula Ferioli*, pp. 52–70; Masai, 'La Vita Patrum Iurensium', pp. 59–62. But the south Italian school has powerful defenders in de Vogüé, *Maître*, I, pp. 211–32, and Neufville, 'Regula IV Patrum', pp. 47–65 (cf. also *Rev. Bn*. LXXV (1965), pp. 307–12). Gallic origins are argued by certain features of vocabulary and perhaps of content; Italian, by liturgical features and by the manuscripts. To an outsider, the controversy merely underlines how very close the orbits of Rome and the Rhône were in the early sixth century. St Benedict almost certainly knew the Rule of Caesarius, and Eugippius may have had experience of Lérins (Prinz, pp. 331–2, n. 34). It is therefore unwise to exclude

altogether the possibilities of an early début in southern Gaul for St Benedict's own rule. At the same time, we are looking not just for knowledge of the Rule, but for a mentality which gives it a primary status. The first evidence for Biscop's type of interest is the privilege of Bishop Aredius of Grosseaux (683), *Diplomata, chartae, epistolae . . . ad res Gallo-Francicas spectantia*, ed. J. M. Pardessus (2 vols, Paris, 1843–9), cccci, II, p. 191. Not only does this charter date some time after Biscop's visit to Lérins; its simultaneous reference to Columbanus points to a northern inspiration here too. However, on these matters see now 'Additional Note', p. 27.

27   VC 3, 5, 8 (pp. 389–91); Mayr-Harting, *Coming*, p. 166. One could add that Wilfrid's experience of the Gallic episcopate should have planted in him the conviction that the monastic discipline of his diocese was very much the bishop's business (cf. n. 53 below). He seems to have attempted reform at Lindisfarne, perhaps by introducing the Rule of Benedict; cf. *Two Lives*, ed. Colgrave, Anon. iii 1, pp. 96–7, Bede's xl, pp. 286–7.

28   See n. 20. This date is certainly implied by *Vit. Wilf.* 14, p. 209, where the Rule and the author seem to arrive together. Cf. *HE* iii 28, iv 2, pp. 195, 205–6. Wilfrid associates the chant and the Rule in his great apologia, *Vit. Wilf.* 47, p. 242.

29   The first to set out the full case for Luxeuil was A. Malnory, *Quid Luxovienses monachi ad regulam monasteriorum atque communem Ecclesiae profectum consulerint* (Paris, 1894), pp. 26–42. It was duly acknowledged by Zimmermann, 'Die Ausbreitung', pp. xlii–liii, and has now acquired a powerful emphasis in Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, pp. 263–92. De Vogüé, *Benoît*, I, pp. 163–9, even makes a case that Columbanus himself knew the Rule. For St Benedict in the south-west, see L. Traube, *Textgeschichte der Regula Sancti Benedicti* (Abhandlungen der königliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, philos., philol. u. hist. Kl. 21 (3), Munich 1898), pp. 690–1; and A. Mundo, 'L'authenticité de la Regula S. Benedicti', *Studia Anselmiana* XLII (1957), pp. 105–58, at pp. 146–9. On the evidence for Rome, or lack of it, see G. Ferrari, *Early Roman Monasteries* (Rome, 1957), pp. 379–91, whose conclusions served to reinforce Dom Hallinger's blockbuster (n. 6 above).

30   The first known illustration is the charter of St Eligius for Solignac, *Vita Eligii episcopi Noviomagensis*, ed. B. Krusch (MGH, SRM IV), App. 2, pp. 743–9. In many subsequent charters, the invocation of the joint rule seems to become formulaic; cf. also the praef. to Reg. Donat. (*PL* LXXXVII, 273), and the passage from the Vita Filiberti quoted above, n. 13.

31   Thus, 'Leodgar canons' xv, in the so-called 'Vetus Gallica', ed. F. Maassen, *Concilia Aevi Merovingici* (MGH Leg. Sect. III, I, Hannover, 1893), pp. 220–1; H. Mordek, *Kirchenrecht und Reform im Frankenreich. Die Collectio Vetus Gallica. Die älteste systematische Kanonessammlung des fränkischen Gallien* (Beiträge zur Geschichte und Quellenkunde des Mittelalters 1, Berlin, 1975), xlvii.12, p. 533.

32   *Vit. Wilf.* 15, p. 209; cf. *HE* iv 2, pp. 205–6; two years are unaccounted for, but Wilfrid may have spent some of them ministering in Kent. The possibilities of a Gallic origin for Wilfrid's Benedictinism have been appreciated, but not discussed, by E. John, '*Saecularium Prioratus*', pp. 219–20.

33   *Jonas, Vita Columbani*, ed. B. Krusch (MGH, SRM IV), i 26, p. 100; J. Guerout, 'Les origines et le premier siècle de l'abbaye', *L'Abbaye royale notre-dame de Jouarre*, ed. Y. Chaussy et al. (2 vols, Paris, 1961), I, pp. 41–7.

34   Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, pp. 174–6.

35 *HE* iv 1, p. 203; HA 3, pp. 366–7.

36 *Jonas, Vit. Col.* i 26, ii 11–22, pp. 99–100, 130–43. Though the decisive evidence is late, there is no reason to doubt that Burgundofaro was Burgundofara's brother (Prinz, p. 126). Burgundofaro's important charter for Rebais (636), a brother foundation of Jouarre, is *Diplomata*, ed. Pardessus, cclxxv, II, pp. 39–41, and Emmo's for Sens (659) is cccxxxv, II, pp. 112–14.

37 HA 4, p. 367. Biscop had made use of Cenwalh's friendship 'et ante non semel'; cf. J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Rome and the Early English Church: Some Problems of Transmission', *Sett. Spol.* VII (1960), pp. 519–48, at p. 547, reprinted in his *EMH*, pp. 115–37, at p. 132.

38 *BCS* 107; S 1164; trans. Whitelock, *EHD* I, no. 55. Cf. Levison, *Continent*, pp. 226–8, but also Chaplais, 'Origin', pp. 55–6, whose doubts seem a little excessive.

39 *Aldhelmi Opera*, ed. R. Ehwald (MGH AA XV), pp. 268–9, 389–90; cf. M. Bateson, 'The Origin and Early History of the Double Monastery', *TRHS* NS xiii (1899), pp. 137–98, at p. 175; *Willibald, Vita Bonifatii*, ed. W. Levison (MGH SRG), i–v, esp. pp. 8–10, 15, 18–19. It may be noted that the scribe of the above charter, Wynberht, became Boniface's abbot at Nursling. It is very surprising that this important, if obscure, southwestern nexus should have been completely ignored in the discussions about the origins of the famous Hatton MS 48 of the Rule of St Benedict; especially as the textual features of its corrected version are very close to Würzburg MS M.p.th.q.22 which has Fulda connections; cf. B. Bischoff, *Libri Sancti Kyliani* (Würzburg, 1952), no. 48, p. 110; P. Meyvaert, 'Towards a History of the Textual Transmission of the *Regula S. Benedicti*', *Scriptorium* XVII (1963), pp. 83–106, at pp. 95–100. P. Engelbert's important review of Farmer's facsimile edition, *Rev. Bn.* LXXIX (1969), pp. 399–413, supplies some grounds for locating the origins as well as the provenance of this manuscript at Worcester. But we have absolutely no known West Saxon material with which to compare it. Besides, Boniface had his links with the Church of Worcester: *Briefe Bonifatius* 112, pp. 243–5.

40 E.g. Athala, subsequently abbot of Bobbio itself, after several years at Lérins; or even Arnulf of Metz, *Vita Arnulfi*, ed. B. Krusch (MGH SRM II), 6, 7, pp. 433–5; cf. *Jonas, Vit. Col.* ii 1, 10, pp. 113, 127.

41 HA 11, p. 375; VC 16, p. 393; cf. *HE* iv 18, p. 241; HA 16, p. 381; VC 20, 25, pp. 395–6; Hom., p. 93 lines 178–80.

42 Levison, *Continent*, pp. 23–7, 187–90.

43 Levison showed, pp. 189–90, that 679 and 680 were the only possible dates for Agatho's charter for Hadrian at Canterbury, *BCS* 38. There was extensive contact between Rome and Canterbury in these years because of the forthcoming Council at Constantinople. But Biscop and Wilfrid were also involved in this traffic; HA 6, p. 369, *HE* iv 18, v 19, pp. 241–2, 326–7; *Vit. Wilf.* 28, 53, pp. 221, 248; *Councils* III, pp. 131–6, 140–1. It is only after his journey in 679–80 that we hear of Wilfrid's charter, *Vit. Wilf.* 43, p. 238. Bishop Earconwald's charter of privilege for Barking (*BCS* 87, S 1246; C. Hart, *Early Charters of Eastern England* (Leicester, 1966), pp. 122–7), might also have been confirmed by Agatho at this time; its authenticity received a powerful boost from Chaplais, 'Single Sheets', p. 330; but Agatho cannot have confirmed any charter in 677, as the extant text implies. Wilfrid had his links with Earconwald, *Vit. Wilf.* 43, p. 236; *BCS* 81, S 1171.

44 HA 3, pp. 366–7; *HE* Praef., pp. 6–7; and Bede's letter to Albinus, *HE*, p. 3.

45 Levison, *Continent*, pp. 187–90. My approach here conflicts with Eric John's interesting paper, '*Saecularium Prioratus*', pp. 222–3 and n. 1, and I must justify myself. First, the suggestion that *BCS* 38's membership of a highly dubious cartulary invalidates its authenticity would undermine one's confidence in a substantial proportion of surviving Anglo-Saxon diplomatic including, for instance, some widely respected early Chertsey charters; it is difficult to see how the monks of St Augustine's can have got hold of 'one good bull', especially such a good one, if not by receiving it themselves; and I would adduce the above-mentioned coincidence of date as a further argument in the extant charter's defence. Second, Biscop's own charter is unlikely to have referred only to secular encroachment (p. 227); though Archbishop Aethelheard refers in an original charter of 803 to a papal mandate on this subject (*BCS* 312, *OSF* I 4), I know of no extant papal charter which mentions the incursions of the laity, without also referring to those of bishop and clergy; in that case, the Monkwearmouth-Jarrow privilege would be of the orthodox type. Third, there is direct evidence of papal privileges in early England, in can. viii of the Legatine Capitulary of 786, *Alc. Ep.* 3, p. 22, and in Aethelheard's charter just referred to. As against these positive indications, the failure of the highly tendentious sources for the tenth-century reformation to refer to privileges used against the reformers can have little significance (cf. chapter 5, below). But the core of John's case, as I understand it, is that such hardened adherents of episcopal authority as Wilfrid, Bede (Ep. Ecgb. 10, 14, pp. 413, 418) and, presumably, Hadrian will not have wished to compromise it by encouraging exemptions. To this one can only reply, fourth, that two of the most distinguished exponents of metropolitan power in the early Middle Ages exempted their foundations from the jurisdiction of their successors: St Caesarius of Arles, *Opera*, ed. Morin, II, pp. 125–7, and St Boniface (*Briefe Bonifatius* 87, 89, pp. 196, 203–5). Contemporary Gallic bishops, as will be seen below, were very generous with their privileges. Thus Bede need have seen no dichotomy between his own monastery's exemption and the subjection of others to episcopal discipline where absolutely necessary. It is possible to exaggerate the potential antipathy between episcopal and monastic positions in the early Middle Ages, and to forget that a good number of the most influential bishops were also monks, even monastic legislators (see n. 10). I gratefully acknowledge the memory of discussing my views with Eric.

46 See nn. 41, 43.

47 *Vit. Wilf.* 45, 47, 51, pp. 239, 242, 245; cf. also 46, 54, 60, pp. 241, 250, 255, etc. Wilfrid's conception of what constituted alien incursions may have been influenced, like his attitude to the succession in general, by Irish 'parochial' structures; cf. John, 'Social and political problems', pp. 59–61. But Eddius' language is confused and ambiguous; I prefer Levison's 'tacit' caution to the categorical assertions of Dr M. Gibbs, 'The Decrees of Pope Agatho and the Gregorian Plan for York', *Speculum* XLVIII (1973), pp. 213–46, at pp. 227–9, 238–9, n. 97.

48 Conc. Carthag. (536), *Mansi, Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* VIII, 841–2, *Concilia Africae, 345–525*, ed. C. Munier (CCSL CXLIX, 1974), p. 283: exclusion of a bishop's cathedra; cf. *Greg. Ep.* vi 44, vii 12, I, pp. 419–20, 454–5; on these norms, see T. P. McLaughlin, *Le très ancien droit monastique de l'Occident* (Paris, 1935), esp. pp. 139–51.

49 *Vit. Wilf.* 51, p. 245: 'ut si quis aliquam contra me accusationem haberet, ad vestram
    mecum praesentiam iudicandus conveniret, sicut beati praedecessoris vestri Sergii papae
    scripta decernebant'; cf. 54, 60, pp. 250, 255.

50 Bede was ordained by Bishop John, 'iubente Ceolfrido abbate', *HE* v 24, p. 357;
    Hwaetberht blessed by Acca, 'advocatur', HA 20, pp. 384–5. Ceolfrid's failure to
    seek permission for his pilgrimage is noted by Dr Isenberg in the monograph referred
    to in n. 1.

51 W. Szaivert, 'Die Entstehung und Entwicklung des Klosterexemption bis zum Ausgang
    des elften Jahrhunderts', *Mitteilungen des österreichischen Instituts für Geschichtsforschung*
    59 (1951), pp. 265–98, at pp. 273–9.

52 As witness the difficulties of Gregory of Tours with the convent of Poitiers, *Lib. Hist.* ix
    39–43, x 15–17, 20. pp. 460–75, 501–9, 513.

53 Notorious French canons are Conc. Orleans (511) 19, Conc. Arles (554), 2, *Conc. Aev.
    Mer.*, ed. Maassen, pp. 7, 119. The English evidence begins at Conc. Hertf. (672) iii, *HE*
    iv 5, p. 216; cf. 'Penitential of Theodore' II vi, *Councils*, pp. 195–6. Thereafter are, in
    ascending order of episcopal severity, the 'Dialogue of Egbert' x, *Councils*, p. 408; Bede,
    Ep. Ecgb. 10, p. 413; Conc. Clov. (747) iv, *Councils*, p. 364; Legatine Council v, *Alc. Ep.*,
    p. 22; and Conc. Chels. (816) iv, viii, *Councils*, pp. 580–3.

54 Levison, *Continent*, p. 192. Gregory's privilege for Arles, *Greg. Ep.* ix 216, II, pp. 203–4,
    is a vivid illustration of the popularity and *raison d'être* of his *privilegia*.

55 *BCS* 133; cf. F. M. Stenton, 'Medeshamstede and its Colonies', in *Prep. ASE*, pp. 185–8.

56 *Liber Diurnus* ed. Th. Sickel (Vienna, 1889), 32, 77, 86, pp. 23–4, 82–3, 111–13.
    Gregory's letter to Marinianus of Ravenna, *Greg. Ep.* viii 17, pp. 19–21, has been
    considered to anticipate some provisions of seventh-century charters, McLaughlin, *Très
    ancien droit monastique*, pp. 118–19; but Gregory leaves the Bishop's powers ultimately
    untrammelled; his main concern is that Marinianus should not abuse his canonical right
    of control over the abbot's travels (cf., e.g., Conc. Arles (554) iii, ed. Maassen, p. 119);
    the tone and language of later documents is very different. Similarly, if the privilege for
    Agaune was the model for that of Chalons (Maassen, pp. 162–3), as is implied by
    Fredegar iv 1 (ed. J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar and
    its Continuation* (London, 1961), p. 4), it can scarcely have involved appeal to Rome, as
    in its purported foundation charter (*Mansi* VIII, 531–6). On the other hand, W.
    Schwarz, 'Iurisdicio und condicio', *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte*,
    kan. Abt., LXXVI (1959), pp. 34–98, denies that there was any change in the seventh
    century. His arguments seem to me to postulate too narrow a translation of 'dicio' and
    'dominatio' and to involve the assumption of a quite excessive number of forgeries,
    including virtually all the Frankish charters of the seventh century; cf. n. 59 below, and
    'Additional Note'.

57 *Codice diplomatico del monastero di S Columbano di Bobbio*, ed. C. Cipolla (3 vols, Fonti
    per la Storia d'Italia 52–4, Rome, 1918), 10, I, pp. 100–3; cf. *Lib. Diurn.* 77; *Jonas, Vit.
    Col.* ii 23, p. 145.

58 *Codice S Columbano* 13, I, pp. 104–12. This charter cannot be accepted as it stands; but
    the close similarity of some of its formulae to those of Frankish charters from the Luxeuil
    connection needs explanation; it also shows that some of its provisions are not entirely
    anachronistic.

59   E. Ewig, 'Klosterprivilegien des 7. und frühen 8. Jahrhunderts', in J. Fleckenstein and K. Schmid (eds), *Adel und Kirche: Gerd Tellenbach zum 65. Geburtstag* (Freiburg, 1968), pp. 52–65, reprinted in his *Spätantikes und frühfränkisches Gallien. Gesammelte Schriften 1952–73* (2 vols, Beihefte der Francia 3, Munich, 1976), II, pp. 411–26; what Ewig calls the 'lesser freedoms' of St Denis, St Pierre-le-Vif and Marculf reserve the diocesan's sacramental and disciplinary rights, but by invitation and as a last resort; the Solignac charter (see n. 30) gives ultimate jurisdiction to the abbot of Luxeuil; Bishop Widegern's privilege for Pirmin's Murbach, *Regesta Alsatiae aevi Merovingici et Karolini*, ed. A. Brückner (2 vols, Strasburg, 1949), 113–14, I, pp. 53–9, and the closely associated Flavigny formulae, *Formulae Merowingici et Karolini Aevi*, ed. K. Zeumer (MGH, Leg. Sect. V), 42–3, pp. 479–81, illustrate the workings of an abbatial 'college'; cf. A. Angenendt, *Monachi Peregrini: Studien zu Pirmin und den monastischen Vorstellungen des frühen Mittelalters* (Munich, 1972), pp. 81–122, 175–97.

60   Formulae Collectionis Sancti Dionysii 3, 9, *Formulae*, ed. Zeumer, pp. 496–8, 501–3; J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'A Background to St Boniface', *England before Conquest*, pp. 35–48, at p. 38, reprinted in his *EMH*, pp. 138–54, at p. 141.

61   The parallel was noted by Levison, *Continent*, pp. 24–5, and Wallace-Hadrill, 'Rome and the Early English Church', p. 541, reprint pp. 128–9. In view of the arguments here advanced, it is hard to agree with Dr Gibbs, 'Decrees of Pope Agatho', pp. 228–9 (cf. pp. 238–9, n. 97), that ascription to St Peter involves protection, but not exemption.

62   W. Levison, 'Die Iren und die fränkische Kirche', in his *Aus rheinischer und fränkischer Frühzeit* (Düsseldorf, 1948), pp. 255–8; Schwarz, 'Iurisdicio und Condicio', pp. 80–1. There is a very interesting sidelight on this point in that Ecgfrith's forged charter for Cuthbert, *BCS* 66, S 66, shares formulae with three early charters for Bobbio (*Codice S. Columbano* 3, 7, 9, pp. 84–9, 91–100); cf. Chaplais, 'Augustine', p. 537 (and cf. chapter 4, pp. **149**).

63   *Diplomata*, ed. Pardessus, cclxxv, cccxxv II, pp. 39–41, 112–14; Guerout, *Jouarre*, pp. 41–2; Ewig, 'Klosterprivilegien', p. 59 (p. 418). Professor Wallace-Hadrill pointed out to me that there are parallels for the royal confirmations of the Monkwearmouth-Jarrow privilege, and of Wilfrid's Mercian monasteries, in the case of St Denis; cf. also Marculf i 2, *Formulae*, ed. Zeumer, pp. 41–3.

64   *HE* iv 18, p. 242.

65   VC 7, p. 390. There are rather striking parallels between Biscop's monasteries as now exposed (see Professor Cramp's paper in *Famulus Christi*), and those described by *Vita Filiberti* 8, pp. 589–90. See Campbell, 'First century', pp. 18–22, reprinted in his *Essays*, pp. 55–9, for other intercourse between English and Gallic Churches at this period.

66   Cf. Mayr-Harting, *Coming*, p. 70. Thus the Gregory miniature in the Leningrad Bede: P. Meyvaert, *Bede and Gregory the Great* (Jarrow Lecture, 1964), pp. 3–4. It cannot be coincidence that Biscop had the book of Job read to him on his deathbed, HA 12, p. 376; in the preface to his *Moralia in Job* (*PL* LXXV, 515–16) Gregory relates his own physical sufferings to Job's: 'Et fortasse hoc divinae providentiae consilium fuit ut percussum Job percussus exponerem et flagellati mentem melius per flagella sentirem'.

67   K. Hallinger, 'Römische Voraussetzungen der Bonifatianischen Wirksamkeit im Frankenreich', *Sankt-Bonifatius Gedenkgabe* (Fulda, 1954), pp. 320–61, esp., e.g., pp. 341–6 on the *Rule of St Benedict* (see 'Additional Note', pp. 27–8.).

68 HA 11, p. 375; cf. VC 20, p. 395.

69 *Education and Culture*, pp. 335–6, 351–2 (French original, pp. 382–3, 399–400); cf. Campbell, 'First century', p. 26, *Essays* p. 63. For the Rule in these circles, Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, pp. 272–4; Gertrude's acquisitions also included relics from Rome and teachers of the 'divini legis carmina de transmarinis regionibus', presumably Ireland, *Vita S. Gertrudis*, ed. B. Krusch (MGH, SRM II), p. 457.

70 *CLA* V, pp. v–vii, VI, pp. xxii–xxv; E. Lesne, *Histoire de la propriété ecclésiastique en France. IV, Les livres, scriptoria et bibliothèques* (Lille, 1938), pp. 38–9; *Education and Culture*, pp. 427–9 (pp. 479–81); Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, pp. 521–3. The great days of the Corbie scriptorium are usually considered to have begun with the visit to Rome of Abbot Grimo (739). But it is almost certain that some of the jewels in the collection had arrived before: e.g. *CLA* V, 562(?), 619–20, 624–9, 632, 633, 635(?), 638(?), 645–6, 656–9(?), 671(?), 675(?), 692; VI 708; XI 1598, 1616–17, 1625; there are many more manuscripts for which the first positive Corbie evidence is late eighth or ninth century, but which could have arrived earlier (see now 'Additional Note', pp. 28–9). Equally, moreover, Bede's library will presumably have been supplemented continuously, 690–730.

71 P. Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers and their Greek Sources*, trans. H. Wedeck (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), pp. 376–84 (French original, 2nd edn, Bibliothèque des Ecoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 159, Paris, 1948, pp. 356–62); H. Vanderhoven and F. Masai, *Regula Magistri. Les Publications de Scriptorium. Edition diplomatique des manuscrits latins 12205 et 12634* (Publications de Scriptorium III, Brussels, 1953), pp. 60–7.

72 *CLA* V, nos. 633, 645–6; Vanderhoven and Masai, pp. 35–8.

73 Laistner, 'Library', pp. 263–6. Another early French collection which is significant for the purposes of comparison is that of Fleury, the house which reformed Lérins and later claimed to possess the bones of St Benedict. For the 'noble rags' of its early library, see *CLA* VI, pp. xviii–xxi, and the MSS, I 104; II 255; V 563–6, 609, 690; VI 745, 797–819. See also *CLA* VI, pp. xv–xviii (Luxeuil, Laon), and p. xxii (Chelles?); generally, *Education and Culture*, pp. 429–30 (pp. 481–2). Even St Filibert may be reintroduced: *CLA* V 589, is a Lyons manuscript of Eucherius which was apparently at Filibert's Noirmoutier in the seventh century (Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, p. 460, n. 33). These collections could boast much of the patristic core of Biscop's library, including two-thirds of its Augustine: nearly all of its historical department (Eusebius, Orosius, Josephus and Gregory of Tours), as well as Sallust and Livy; and even its Pliny the elder (*CLA* V 575, a sixth-century Italian manuscript, later at St Amand). It is not so easy to find parallels for its apparent wealth of grammatical, chronological, hagiographical and poetical sections. However, we are dependent for our evidence, in one case, upon the prodigious output of a Bede, in the other, on the survival of a few cathedral and private archives until modern times; this is scarcely an evenly balanced match.

74 Wallace-Hadrill, 'Rome and the Early English Church', p. 536, reprint pp. 129–31; Campbell, 'First century', pp. 25–6, *Essays* pp. 62–4.

75 This is a primary thesis of the two important surveys already referred to: *Education and Culture*, pp. 361–2, 495–9 (pp. 410, 548–52); Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, pp. 15, 291, 493, 525–6, 531, 544–8.

76 J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Long-Haired Kings* (London, 1962), pp. 217–20, 222–4; Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, pp. 490–3.

77 Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, pp. 497–9.

78 The twenty-three do include the Khan of the Avars, but would be twenty-four were one to include Ebroin, mayor of the Neustrian palace. We have references to the friendship of Eanflæd, *Vit. Wilf.* 2, p. 195, Earconberht 3, p. 196, Alchfrith 7, pp. 200–1, Wulfhere 15, p. 210, Ecgfrith and Æthelthryth 19, p. 214, Dagobert II 28, p. 221, Perctarit 28, p. 222, Æthelwald 41, p. 234, Caedwalla 42, p. 235, and Æthelred 43, p. 238; for the secular aristocracy, 2, 21, 24, 59, pp. 194–5, 216, 218, 254.

79 D. P. Kirby, 'Bede's Native Sources for the Historia Ecclesiastica', *BJRL* XLVIII (1966), pp. 341–71, at p. 350. For the possible significance of this point, Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, pp. 493–5, 502–3; J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *Early Germanic Kingship in England and on the Continent* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 50–3; cf. F. Graus, *Volk, Herrscher und Heilige im Reich der Merowinger* (Prague, 1965), pp. 397–8, 416–19, 430–7.

80 Oswiu, HA 1, p. 364; Alchfrith, HA 2, p. 365; Ecgbert, HA 3, p. 367; Cenwalh, HA 4, p. 367; Ecgfrith, HA 4, 6, 7, 8, pp. 367, 369, 370, 372; VC 11, 12, pp. 391, 392; Aldfrith, HA 9, 15, pp. 373, 380; Osred, HA 15, p. 380.

81 H. Quentin, *Les Martyrologes historiques du moyen âge* (Paris 1908), pp. 47–56; H.A. Wilson (ed.), *The Calendar of St Willibrord* (Henry Bradshaw Society 55, 1918), p. viii and n., p. 36. (See also 'Additional Note', p. 29.)

82 Cf. Mayr-Harting, *Coming*, pp. 156–7. What follows is not necessarily incompatible with Dr Mayr-Harting's conclusions. It is undoubtedly important that Monkwearmouth-Jarrow should have enjoyed so large a share of royal patronage, and this might well explain Bede's commitment to the unification of Northumbria (chapters 4 and 6 below). But the attitude of kings to Holy Men is one thing; that of Holy Men to the world at large is quite another. Biscop and Ceolfrith are not presented as the patrons of kings, like Cuthbert, Wilfrid, Guthlac and Columba (cf. Wallace-Hadrill, *Early Germanic Kingship*, pp. 55–64). There are very significant differences between a saint who is the friend and counsellor of a dozen kings and one whose biographer refers, in passing, to his frequent attendance at the king's council. There are revealing differences, too, between the way Wilfrid and Biscop used the Old Testament: Wilfrid, in order to reinforce his followers' sense that they were a comitatus, *Vit. Wilf.* 13, pp. 207–8, cf. 62, p. 258; Biscop and Ceolfrid, to emphasize that their two communities were one spiritual brotherhood, HA 13, p. 377; VC 25, p. 397. It is thus unsurprising that Wilfrid should have inspired Aldhelm's remarkable letter to this followers (trans. Whitelock, *EHD*, no. 165; and, for its similarity to *Beowulf* lines 2884–91, the same author's 'Anglo-Saxon Poetry and the Historian', *TRHS*, 4th ser. XXXI (1949), pp. 89–90; Biscop, the homily which is discussed below. Whatever their respective links with the Northumbrian aristocracy, Wilfrid's monks were more obviously influenced by aristocratic priorities.

83 For example, Pontius' Life of Cyprian, or Possidius' of Augustine; the latter known to Bede.

84 Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, pp. 56–8, 457–64. But, as Prinz notes, pp. 464–7, fashions around Lérins had changed when the Vita of Caesarius was composed. As Dr Mayr-Harting reminds me, Bede's prayers also seem to bear the stamp of Lérins; cf. M. T. A. Carroll, *The Venerable Bede: His Spiritual Teachings* (Catholic University of America, Studies in Medieval History, NS IX, Washington, DC, 1946), pp. 209–11.

85 *PL* L, 1249–72; trans. R. Deferrari, *Early Christian Biographies* (Fathers of the Church 15, Washington, DC, 1952), pp. 355–94.

86 J. Campbell, *Bede, The Great Histories* (New York, 1968), pp. xxv–xxx, reprint pp. 42–5; cf. Mayr-Harting, *Coming*, pp. 74–5. Pope Gregory's views on the limitations of the miraculous as proof of sanctity, for which see C. W. Jones, *Saints' Lives and Chronicles in Early England* (Ithaca, NY, 1947), pp. 76–7, were quoted by Bede, *HE* i 31, pp. 66–7, and may have influenced the atmosphere in his monastery. But where Gregory had preached caution, the Cassianic and Lérins traditions actually practised it; cf. O. Chadwick, *John Cassian* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 1968), pp. 51, 100.

87 Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, pp. 277–8; based on R. Buchner, *Die Provence in der Merowingischer Zeit* (Arbeiten z. deutschen Rechts- und Verfassungs-geschichte IX, Stuttgart, 1933); cf. also *CLA* VI, p. xxix; *Education and Culture*, pp. 188–9 (pp. 232–3); C. Nordenfalk, 'Before the Book of Durrow', *Acta Archaeologica* XVIII (1947), pp. 141–74, at pp. 159–66.

88 Thus, Amandus, Eligius, Desiderius, Bonitus and (yet again!) Filibert; cf. Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, pp. 300–16. There are several indications that St Martin remained the primary patron of Amand, including the number of Sulpician quotations in his Vita.

89 Matthew 19:16–30. See n. 1 for the Homily.

90 J. Leclercq, 'Mönchtum und Peregrinatio im Frühmittelalter', *Römische Quartalschrift* 55 (1960), pp. 212–25; cf. *Aux Sources de la spiritualité occidentale* (Paris, 1964), pp. 35–65. Angenendt, *Monachi Peregrini*, pp. 124–75, is an especially imaginative survey of this theme. Relevant English texts are *Vit. Wilf.* 4, p. 196, and *Vita Bonifatii* 1, p. 7.

91 K. Hughes, 'The Changing Theory and Practice of Irish Pilgrimage', *JEH* XI (1960), pp. 143–51; but cf. Angenendt, *Monachi Peregrini*, pp. 149–51, and n. 49; for a slightly different view, K. Hauck, 'Von einer spätantiken Randkultur zum karolingischen Europa', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 1 (1967), pp. 3–93, at pp. 57–68.

92 HA 3, p. 366; *HE* iii 13, 19, 27, iv 3, 23, v 9, 19, pp. 152, 163, 193, 211, 253, 296–8, 324–5; iii.27, in particular, shows that Ecgberht's pilgrimage was Irish-influenced, for no Englishman needed to leave the island of Britain in order to separate himself from his kindred, *gens* or *patria* in the seventh century, whereas it was essential that a serious Irish pilgrim should leave Ireland. In *HE* v 19, p. 325, Bede renders *Vit. Wilf.* 6, p. 200, 'transmarinus' by 'peregrinus'. Witberht's 'locus peregrinationis', v.9, p. 298, had nothing to do with his preaching. I am grateful to Dr T. M. Charles-Edwards for help on this subject (and see now 'Additional Note', p. 29).

93 Hom., pp. 92–3 lines 120–61; cf. Hilarii sermo de vita S. Honorati viii (37), (*PL* L, 1270).

94 Hence, it is understandable that Bede should have avoided any use of the Abraham text, with its connotations of physical displacement.

95 VC 8, pp. 390–1. For parallels, see n. 24.

96 E. A. Lowe, *English Uncial* (Oxford, 1961); R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, 'The Art of the Codex Amiatinus' (Jarrow Lecture, 1967, *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* XXXII (1969), pp. 1–25). Cf. R. W. Southern, 'Bede', *Medieval Humanism and Other Studies* (London, 1970), pp. 1–8, at p. 2.

97 R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, 'The Decoration', in Sir T. Kendrick et al. (eds), *Evangelia quattuor Codex Lindisfarnensis* (2 vols, Otten-Lausanne 1960), II, esp. pp. 110–12,

222–43, 250–1; with his 'The Reception by the Anglo-Saxons of Mediterranean Art', *Sett. Spol.* XIV (1967), pp. 798–825, at pp. 800–5; and 'The Art', pp. 13–14, 17–18, 24.

98 C. Peers and C. A. Ralegh Radford, 'The Saxon Monastery at Whitby', *Archaeologia* LXXXIX (1943), pp. 27–88, which, in this respect, I see no reason to challenge; cf. R. Cramp, in Bonner (ed.), *Famulus Christi*, pp. 5–18, at p. 8.

99 Bruce-Mitford, 'The Reception', pp. 817–18; 'The Art', pp. 19–24; R. Cramp, 'Decorated window-glass and Millefiori from Monkwearmouth', *Antiquaries' Jnl* L (1970), pp. 327–35, at pp. 330–3; 'Excavations at the Saxon monastic sites of Wearmouth and Jarrow, Co. Durham: an interim report', *Medieval Archaeology* XIII (1969), pp. 21–66, at p. 58. However, in this artistic sphere, it should be noted that the evidence from Wilfrid's Hexham is even more uncompromisingly ultramontane than that for Biscop's monasteries. The Hexham slabs are almost wholly lacking in recognizable insular themes: powerful evidence of Wilfrid's cosmopolitanism, and that not every aspect of aristocratic culture in Northumbria appealed to him. See R. Cramp 'Early Northumbrian Sculpture at Hexham', in D. P. Kirby (ed.), *Saint Wilfrid at Hexham* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1974), pp. 115–40.

100 Thus the Leningrad Bede is not very obviously 'mediterranean'; and why did Abbot Cuthberht need a 'citharista' (*EHD I*, no. 185)?

101 F. Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, pp. 278–9; K. Schmid, 'Religiöses und Sippengebundenes Gemeinschaftsbewusstsein im Frühmittelalterlichen Gedenkbucheinträgen', *DA* XI (1965), pp. 18–81, at pp. 50–4, 63–4. Once again, one is relieved to follow Levison, *Continent*, pp. 27–9.

102 HA 11, 13, pp. 375–6, 376–7; VC 16, pp. 393–4. It is assumed by Plummer, II, p. 364, that Ceolfrid was actually Biscop's kinsman. This involves translating 'non tam . . . quam' as 'not only . . . but also', which is not always accurate for Bede: cf. *HE* i 12, p. 26. Eosterwine, on the other hand, was certainly a relative of Biscop's, HA 8, p. 371; VC 12, p. 392, but great care is taken to describe his spiritual qualifications. By my reading of the texts, Biscop's objections are to the succession of kinsmen for kindred's sake. He is worried, not only about 'frater meus . . . carnalis', but also 'ne secundum genus umquam, ne deforis aliunde, vobis patrem quaeratis' (loc. cit.). Moreover, the same concern is shared by Ceolfrid, twenty-six years later, when Biscop's brother should have been dead, or nearly so, HA 16, p. 381, VC 25, p. 396; there is no suggestion that Hwætberht belonged to Founder's Kin. As for Wilfrid's provisions on the succession, they seem to contradict one another, *Vit. Wilf.* 62–3, pp. 257–9. *HE* iv 16, p. 237, is, however, a clear indication of Wilfrid's practice in this respect: 300 hides, 'utendam pro Domino', were entrusted to Wilfrid's sister's son, Bernwine – a 'clericus', but one whose qualifications were such that it was necessary to appoint a priest, Hiddila, in order to carry out the ministry of word and water.

103 Torhthelm: cf. HA 5, p. 368, VC 7, p. 390.

104 VC 40, pp. 403–4.

105 VC 12, p. 392, cf. HA 7, p. 370. Bede implies that Eosterwine's appointment was the result of Biscop's journeys overseas. But HA 8, 14, pp. 371, 379, date his appointment to 682; this is exactly midway between Biscop's fifth and sixth visits to Rome. Hence, confirmation for VC 10–12, pp. 391–2, whereby Eosterwine was made abbot tempor-

arily during the journey of 678–9, but permanent abbot only in 682, because of Biscop's absences on the king's business.

106   For the 'academic' merit of the Amiatinus, cf. B. Fischer, 'Codex Amiantinus und Cassiodor', *Biblische Zeitschrift* NS VI (1962), pp. 77–9, and Dr Meyvaert's paper in *Famulus Christi*, pp. 40–69, at p. 50.

107   Thus, the famous judgement of W. P. Ker, quoted by R. W. Chambers, 'Bede', *PBA* XXII (1936), pp. 129–56, at p. 132.

Additional Note

The original version of this paper was rightly criticized for grossly overloaded annotation, both by my then teacher, Michael Wallace-Hadrill, and subsequently by Professor Goffart, 'Bede and the Ghost of Bishop Wilfrid', p. 315; there is correspondingly little to be said for seriously expanding the range of reference here, multiply enriching as subsequent contributions have been. Some advances cannot, however, be overlooked (though those noted here will tend to be confined to works in English, not least because I am less familiar with the continental literature in this field than I aimed to have been thirty years ago).

1   The development of monastic ideas and legislation: Peter Brown's miles-deep intellectual fertility has of course continued to bear unrivalled harvests. To be singled out as regards the argument presented here is, perhaps (and title notwithstanding), *Relics and Social Status in the Age of Gregory of Tours* (Stenton Lecture 10, Reading, 1977), reprinted in his *Society and the Holy* (cf. n. 7, above), pp. 222–50. Meanwhile, Philip Rousseau continued to develop his insights and ours: 'Cassian, Contemplation and the Coenobitic Life', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* XXVI (1975), pp. 113–26; and *Pachomius: The Making of a Community in Fourth-Century Egypt* (Berkeley, Calif., 1985); while Sister Benedicta Ward has translated *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers* (Cistercian Studies 59, rev. edn, 1984), and introduced N. Russell (trans.), *The Lives of the Desert Fathers* (Cistercian Studies 34, 1981).

2   The issue of the *Rules* of Benedict and 'The Master' has been strikingly reopened by my one-time Glasgow colleague, Dr Marilyn Dunn, 'Mastering Benedict: Monastic rules and their authors in the early medieval West', *EHR* CV (1990), pp. 567–94; with Dom de Vogüé's 'Reply', and her own 'Rejoinder', ibid. CVII (1992), pp. 95–111; and finally her book, itself a major contribution to the overall scenario, *The Emergence of Monasticism: From the Desert Fathers to the Early Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2000), especially chapters 5–6 (NB pp. 128–9). My own sense remains much as it was in n. 26 above: viz. that the issue is unresolved, and in all likelihood, given the abiding fluidity of monastic legislation into the seventh century, ultimately irresolvable; but that the very persistence of the controversy makes (as is so often the case) a point of equal, conceivably greater, importance: that the monastic cultures of meridional Gaul and suburbicarian Italy were very closely interlinked in St Benedict's time, if not later. But my reading of Columbanus' own *Rule*, and still more of its Frankish offshoots (above, nn. 11, 21, 30, as well as 26) inclines me to doubt whether any 'Hiberno-Germanic' connection had much to do with the genesis of 'The Master'.

3   The picture of early Frankish monasticism that I had derived from Professors Riché and
    Prinz has been modified in very significant respects, above all by Professor Ian Wood.
    These modifications are effectively summarized in his *The Merovingian Kingdoms* (Lon-
    don, 1994), especially chapter 11; but see in particular his 'breakthrough' study, 'A prelude
    to Columbanus: the monastic achievement in the Burgundian territories', in H. B. Clarke
    and M. Brennan (eds), *Columbanus and Merovingian Monasticism* (British Archaeological
    Reports, International Series 113, Oxford, 1981), pp. 3–32. In addition, there is now an
    important collection, M. Lapidge (ed.), *Columbanus: Studies on the Latin Writings* (Studies
    in Celtic History, Woodbridge, 1997), opening with a characteristic essay by Professor
    Donald Bullough on 'The career of Columbanus', pp. 1–28. On Professor Prinz's view of
    the gulf between Provençal/Caesarian and Loire/Martinian monasticism, see C. Leyser,
    Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great (Oxford, 2000); together with
    two valuable Caesarian studies by W. E. Klingshirn, *Caesarius of Arles: The Making of a
    Christian Community in Late Antique Gaul* (Cambridge, 1993); and (translation, with
    notes and introduction), *Caesarius of Arles: Life, Testament, Letters* (Translated Texts for
    Historians 19, Liverpool, 1994). With regard to the comment in n. 31, that the *RB* begins
    to appear solo as early as the 'Leodgar canons' in the 'Vetus Gallica', one should note
    the good case put up by the late Professor Ullmann, when – otherwise most warmly –
    reviewing (*EHR* XCII (1977), pp. 359–64) Professor Mordek's great edition, *Kirchenrecht
    und Reform im Frankenreich: Die Collectio Vetus Gallica, die älteste systematischer Kanones-
    sammlung des fränkischen Gallien. Studien und Edition* (Berlin, 1975), that the 'canons' are
    in fact a later interpolation.

4   Other aspects of Professor Prinz's encapsulation of the later Merovingian monastic scene,
    especially (e.g.) the figure of St Audoin, are reconsidered by R. A. Gerberding, *The Rise of
    the Carolingians and the Liber Historiae Francorum* (Oxford, 1987), chapter V, and by
    P. Fouracre and R. A. Gerberding, *Late Merovingian France. History and Hagiography,
    640–720* (Manchester Medieval Sources, 1996), pp. 13–18, 20–1, with items II, III (esp.
    its introduction, pp. 133–52) and VII.

5   Professor Wallace-Hadrill further expanded his view of Romano-Merovingian links in
    The Frankish Church (Oxford History of the Christian Church, general editors H. and
    O. Chadwick, 1983), chapter 7; but it has been variously qualified by Wood, *Merovingian
    Kingdoms*, pp. 243–6, and T. Reuter, 'St Boniface and Europe' in Reuter (ed.), *'The
    Greatest Englishman'. Essays on St Boniface and the Church at Crediton* (Exeter, 1980),
    pp. 71–94.

6   Traditional (quasi-confessional?) orthodoxies as regards early papal charters of monastic
    exemption were finally turned on their head between the composition and publication of
    this paper by H. H. Anton, *Studien zu den Klosterprivilegien der Päpste im frühen
    Mittelalter* (Beiträge zur Geschichte und Quellenkunde des Mittelalters 4, Berlin,
    1975), establishing that some of the least promising texts are substantially authentic. As
    a consequence, only the more steamingly concocted of these documents can now be
    brushed aside – so underpinning the position more tentatively adopted by Professor Ewig
    (n. 59, above).

7   Amidst much else of inestimable value for later Merovingian history, H. Atsma (ed.), *La
    Neustrie. Les pays au nord de la Loire de 650 à 850* (2 vols, Sigmaringen, 1989) contains
    papers on Corbie and early Merovingian learning by D. Ganz, 'Corbie and Neustrian

monastic culture 661–849', and by R. McKitterick, 'The diffusion of insular culture in Neustria between 650 and 850: the implications of the manuscript evidence', II, pp. 339–47, 395–432; see also the associated papers by Professors Riché and Vezin, pp. 297–318.

8   Since the publication of D. P. Kirby, 'Bede, Eddius Stephanus and the *Life of St Wilfrid*', *EHR* XCVIII (1983), pp. 101–14, it has become good practice to question the identification of 'Stephen the priest', self-proclaimed author of the 'Vita Wilfridi' (Preface, p. 193) in both MSS – there is, incidentally, no doubt that the 'Fell' and Salisbury MSS are the same, B. Colgrave (ed. and trans.), *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus* (Cambridge, 1927), pp. xiv–xv, but the story of the Fell MS's return to Salisbury after three centuries must await another occasion – with 'Æddi cognomento Stephanus', the Kentish choirmaster invited north by Wilfrid in or soon after 669 (*HE*, iv 2, p. 205, cf. Vit. Wilf. xiv, with xlvii, pp. 209, 241–3, and above, n. 28). That position is certainly defensible but not conclusive; I still incline to the implications of Professor Wallace-Hadrill's note, *Historical Commentary*, p. 139: 'However, it is a Stephanus who is . . . summoned by Wilfrid from Kent, and it is a Stephanus who writes Wilfrid's *Vita*.' Accordingly, I have seen no compelling reason to change the above text's and notes' traditional attribution of the work to 'Eddius'.

9   On the cult of King Oswald and its significance, see C. Stancliffe and E. Cambridge (eds), *Oswald. Northumbrian King to European Saint* (Paul Watkins Medieval Studies 20, Stamford, 1995), esp. (e.g.) the paper by Dr Thacker; and V. Gunn, 'Bede and the Martyrdom of St Oswald', in D. Wood (ed.), *Martyrs and Martyrologies* (Studies in Church History XXX, 1993), pp. 57–66.

10 Professor Charles-Edwards' reading of Irish and other 'peregrinationes' were subsequently published: T. M. Charles-Edwards, 'The Social Background to Irish *Peregrinatio*', *Celtica 9: Studies in Memory of Myles Dillon* (1976), pp. 43–59.

11 For many of these themes, see also I. Wood, *The Most Holy Abbot Ceolfrid* (Jarrow Lecture, 1995).

2

Bede, *Beowulf* and the Conversion of the Anglo-Saxon Aristocracy

I Introduction: Bede versus *Beowulf*

The Venerable Bede did not believe in birthdays. He preferred men to be commemorated on the anniversary of their deaths. It is entirely in keeping with his own priorities that we should know much more about his last hours than about all the rest of his life put together. It is therefore most unlikely that, quite apart from his famous humility, he would have endorsed a *Festschrift* designed to commemorate the thirteenth century of his birth. It is as well to begin by making this point, as this is not the only respect in which Bede's priorities will have differed from those of modern historians. Perhaps the major trend in the historical study of Bede since the last anniversary in 1935, which was marked by a mass of celebratory literature, in which A. Hamilton Thompson's *Bede, his Life, Times and Writings* formed the centrepiece and to which Cornell's M. L. W. Laistner made so memorable a contribution, has been the growing awareness that Bede was not a historian like ourselves, and that he differed in more than just his faith in miracles. In this paper, reflecting the trend, I wish to argue that, if a modern historian wishes to understand the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy, he has less to learn from Bede than from other sources, some of which are not works of history at all. This might perhaps seem a strange way of paying tribute to a master of the historian's craft; yet I am convinced that, even if my argument be accepted, Bede's stature as a historian is thereby enhanced, rather than diminished.[1]

Until recently, and certainly still in 1935, commentators were mainly concerned to emphasize, and to praise, the many respects in which Bede came up to their own exacting standards, whether of religious orthodoxy in the sixteenth century, or of historical accuracy in the twentieth. For example, Sir Frank Stenton's fine paragraph on Bede is, in some ways, a fairer portrait of his own great book than of Bede's:

> [Bede's] critical faculty was always alert; his narrative never degenerates into a tissue of ill-attested wonders, and in regard to all the normal substance of history his work can be judged as strictly as any historical writing of any time. His preface, in which he acknowledged the help received from learned friends, reads like the introduction to a modern work of scholarship. But the quality which makes his work great is not his scholarship, nor the faculty of narrative which he shared with many contemporaries, but his astonishing power of co-ordinating the fragments of information which came to him through tradition, the relation of friends, or documentary evidence ... [2]

That Bede did indeed possess these qualities is not disputed. *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People* is so excellent a source of knowledge for the period it concerns that it would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that we know more about the conversion of the English than about any series of events in British history until the twelfth century. Yet it is possible that the book's very excellence is one of its drawbacks in that it conceals from view, as lesser medieval historians do not, that Bede's conception of the nature and purposes of history will have been very different from ours. Since 1935 scholars have made massive advances in the edition and study of Bede's non-historical works, fields into which it is not possible to follow him with the same sense of familiarity, and which remind us more of what distinguishes us from Bede than of what we have in common with him.[3] Recently, too, students of Bede have become more conscious that Bede's *History* was itself a member of a particular historiographical tradition, which was that of the Christian early Middle Ages, and not that of the Victorian university.[4] This has not entailed a decline in respect for Bede's authority. So far as facts are concerned, his chronology of the Kentish conversion has withstood critical examination more successfully than has that of Gregory of Tours for the baptism of Clovis.[5] But it has meant a new tendency to recognize that what Bede will have considered appropriate *ad instructionem posteritatis* is not necessarily what we should wish to know if we are to understand the events that he is describing.

Hence, changing attitudes to Bede have been accompanied by the asking of new questions about the age that he describes, and the search for other angles of approach to it, whether historical or, more particularly, archaeological and art-historical. At its crudest, the *Ecclesiastical History*'s main theme could be reduced to: 'At this time the *A* people received the Faith from Saint *B* under the rule of King *C*.' Historians are nowadays keen to know not only *that* this was so, but also *how* and *why*. In the process, histories of the early English Church have largely ceased to be *catenae* of the astonishing series of immortal stories with which Bede adorns his theme, and Henry Mayr-Harting's *Coming of Christianity to Anglo-Saxon England* has become perhaps the first treatment of the subject to give Wilfrid, Aldhelm and Guthlac, all of whom suffer in different ways from Bede's dominant perspectives, the same weight as is given to Aidan, Chad and Cuthbert, who are, of course, Bede's special heroes.[6] The connection between the re-investigation of Bede's historical work and fresh

approaches to his age is also made in the work of James Campbell, who has followed two surveys of Bede's place in the historiographical tradition of the early medieval West with a reassessment of the 'First Century of English Christianity' in the light of factors which Bede's *History* largely ignores: the growth of ecclesiastical wealth, the expansion of monasticism, and the very close contemporary links between England and Gaul.[7] In this essay I intend to continue the search for alternative perspectives. Specifically, I wish to suggest that we can supplement and modify Bede's portrait of the conversion of the early English nobility by consideration of its vernacular literature, and above all by investigating further the other major masterpiece of early English literary culture, *Beowulf*.

In 1935 it would have seemed outrageous to most scholars, and to many it may still seem extraordinary today, to suggest that a unique, anonymous and scarcely datable poem, concerned almost wholly with real and legendary events in Scandinavia at least a hundred years before the conversion of the English really got under way, might in some ways tell us more about the realities of seventh- and eighth-century England than a historian who is universally recognized, and who has been seen almost from the start to be among the greatest that have ever lived. But it is not only the study of Bede that has changed. Recent directions of research into *Beowulf*, and associated 'heroic' literature, have done much to enhance its historical relevance. Two directions may be distinguished in particular, the historical and the literary.

That Anglo-Saxon poetry should have something to tell us about early English society has been accepted since the days of J. M. Kemble, and, in the hands of H. M. Chadwick, this literature became, for a time, a devastating instrument of historical, and even sociological, assault upon the nineteenth-century school of early Germanic studies.[8] But it was in 1935 itself that Ritchie Girvan, in his *Beowulf and the Seventh Century*, presented closer parallels than had ever before been noticed between the world of the poem and that of seventh-century England. Like W. W. Lawrence, who had made some of the same points in his *Beowulf and the Epic Tradition* (1928), Girvan was more concerned to elucidate the poem itself than its historical background, but his arguments included profound insights, based on his knowledge of the poem, into the culture and politics of the period.[9] For example, the central figures of the poem are frequently found outside their own 'national' and 'tribal' contexts, serving as exiles, adventurers, retainers and leaders of war bands at the court of 'foreign' kings; it was in this capacity that Beowulf himself came to the court of Hrothgar with his escort. Chadwick had shown that this was also a significant feature of early English society. The way in which King Oswine of Deira (642/4–51) by his 'generosity' and 'courtesy' caused 'noblemen from almost every kingdom to flock to serve him as retainers' is closely paralleled in the poem by the way that Hrothgar's 'success in war (*herespéd*), his glory in battle' were such that 'his band of young followers grew into a mighty following (*magodriht micel*)'.[10] Girvan's achievement was to show how the operations of this mechanism accounted for the political developments of seventh-century Britain, whereby the frontier kingdoms, Bernicia

and Deira, Mercia and Wessex were continually growing stronger, whereas the older kingdoms of the south and east, notably Kent and East Anglia, were atrophying. Expanding kingships, offering prospects of rewards in loot and land, were able, like Hrothgar, to attract this class of wandering warrior to their banners, at the expense of those whose outlets were being blocked, and it was by attracting such military specialists that kings were able to continue their campaigns of expansion. It was a snowball process, in which the great grew greater and the weak melted away.

The possible impact of Girvan's views was immeasurably increased by discoveries in the second field, that of archaeology. Two of the most famous excavations since 1935 have revealed, at Yeavering in Northumberland, a large complex of wooden halls that is irresistibly reminiscent of *Heorot*, and at Sutton Hoo, in Suffolk, a treasure both fabulous in quantity and venerable in age, much of it showing Scandinavian connections, which thus recalled the various heirlooms described by the *Beowulf* poet, and which, interred as it is within a ship and beneath a barrow, resembles what we should achieve, if we conflated the obituary ceremonies for Scyld at the beginning and Beowulf at the end of the poem.[11] It may be that the significance of these parallels has been exaggerated, but, at the very least, the lavish material world of the poem has now been given its counterpart in the material deposits of seventh-century Britain.

Third, and finally, Professor Dorothy Whitelock, in her celebrated *Audience of Beowulf* (1951) widened the possibilities for the poem's date into the later eighth century, and brought to light, mainly with the help of place-names, an audience of Anglo-Saxons to whom Grendel, his mother and the dragon, the monstrous foes of Beowulf, will have seemed every bit as real as human enemies. She also demonstrated, from external evidence, what the poem itself had already suggested to earlier scholars, that the poet's audience must have been familiar with a wide variety of similar stories, to the extent that he could afford to refer to them only in passing.[12] *Beowulf* might thus be seen to reflect not only the behaviour and material environment, but also the fears and literary tastes of the early Anglo-Saxons.

To say this is not, of course, to ignore Professor Whitelock's own warning against reading precise contemporary relevance into 'poetry [with] a preference for the typical situation with a universal application'. But it was Marc Bloch's view, stunningly put into practice in his *Feudal Society*, that 'in every literature, society contemplates its own image', and literature can sometimes tell us a lot about the society in which it arose, precisely because it is not primarily concerned to tell us anything.[13] The general atmosphere of life as it was lived by Bede's contemporaries, give or take a couple of generations, probably is reflected in *Beowulf*. It now seems very likely that King Oswald of the Bernicians (633–42) was actually much more like King Hygelac of the Geatas than any reader of Bede's famous chapters would immediately appreciate, and both kings certainly met the same sort of death. The impression given by close attention to narrative sources, to archaeology and even to toponymy, suggests that, unique as it is, *Beowulf* represents significant

features of the world that Bede describes and gives us important clues in the understanding of it.

For this there is, perhaps, one particular reason. *Beowulf, Finnsburh, Waldhere* and the later *Battle of Maldon* are literature about, for and even by the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy. The early law-codes establish the existence of an aristocracy of birth in Anglo-Saxon England, as they do not on the Continent.[14] But quite apart from the legal evidence, there are ample indications, as on the Continent, of a prominent de facto aristocracy. One revealing story in Bede describes how the Northumbrian thegn Imma was betrayed as a warrior, and thus liable to vengeance, by his 'appearance, manner and conversation'.[15] In early Anglo-Saxon charters, several beneficiaries or witnesses are described as the 'faithful' or 'revered' 'companion' or 'minister' of the king, and it is their closeness to him that constitutes their claim on his gratitude.[16] Perhaps above all, archaeology demonstrates that early English society knew a class of wealthy specialized warriors. Certain graves are distinguished by the appearance in them of weaponry that is otherwise extremely rare – swords, helmets, coats of mail – and where they are found, the rest of the deposit is often extremely rich.[17] Quite apart from the whens and wherefores of the appearance of cavalry in western Europe, possession of this sophisticated equipment must already have given its owner some of the same military significance as the later mounted knight. It is thus understandable, first, that kings should have sought to attract such figures to their standards; second, that those kings who could do so rapidly increased their military power; and third, that the warriors themselves should have developed, on the classic Weberian prescription, an awareness that they were an elite.

It is clear enough that we encounter this class in *Beowulf* and in associated literature. Beowulf himself is escorted and buried by the sons of noblemen, and the poem is stiff with the terminology of the retinue. The word *eorl*, which, in the earliest laws, signifies 'noble', in contrast to *ceorl* – 'commoner' – is used in the poem no less than seven times as often as *ceorl*, thus suggesting that the poet took the noble status of his subjects almost for granted.[18] The military equipment which archae-ology reveals to have been rare and precious is virtually universal in *Beowulf, Finnsburh*, and *Waldhere* (also in the Old High German *Hildebrandslied*). Beowulf himself disposes of three sets of helmet, corselet and sword, and the same combin-ation is attributed to four other individuals and to three groups of retainers. As Girvan said, 'everything specifically indicated in the poem is gold.'[19] It thus seems reasonable to use heroic literature as a window on the mentality of a warrior aristocracy, whose existence and whose importance is reflected by other sources, historical, legal and archaeological, but whose preoccupations do not seem to be described elsewhere.

Least of all are they described in Bede. It is possible to find evidence in Bede that the world of *Beowulf* was the same world as that whose history Bede is telling, but Bede's is an *Ecclesiastical History*: secular heroes, court life, warfare in general, had no place in the tradition, and monsters still less of one. For all that the poet and the

historian share a certain loftiness of tone, it seems likely that the beginner, confronted with similar translations of each, would conclude that they came from different civilizations altogether. They are separated by what Professor Momigliano, in another, not dissimilar, context, has called a 'vast zone of silence'.[20] That is why Anglo-Saxon heroic poetry offers more than a complement, it offers an alternative perspective to Bede's impression of his age, all the more important for the fact that it is a perspective to some extent representative of a powerful body in society.[21] It is the emergence of this literature in such a capacity since 1935 that encourages a historian to take a closer look at parallel developments in a more 'literary' field.

In 1936, one year after the last Bede anniversary, and in the same volume of the *Proceedings of the British Academy* as contained a characteristic panegyric on Bede by R. W. Chambers, Professor J. R. R. Tolkien published his '*Beowulf*: the monsters and the critics', which it would be no exaggeration to describe as one of the most influential works of literary criticism of that century, and since which nothing in *Beowulf* studies has been quite the same.[22] The arguments of Tolkien's paper were not universally accepted, and some of its effects would perhaps have been disowned by the author, but its general impact could be summarized by saying that most critics have learnt to take the *Beowulf* poet a great deal more seriously.

To previous generations of critics, visibly obsessed with the Homeric model, there was little dignity in the hero's struggles with monsters that were at once improbable and disgusting, and the view that the poem was 'cheap' or 'trivial' encouraged the opinion that it was also irrelevant: the *real* epics of the Anglo-Saxons must have been lost.[23] Similarly, it was generally accepted by 1936 that *Beowulf* was largely the work of a single author, and was composed in writing, but as long as such authoritative critics as Klaeber, the poem's most distinguished editor, continued to be embarrassed by the poem's structure, it remained a serious possibility that the poem had descended in the manner of Homer, rather than that of Vergil.[24]

Tolkien argued powerfully that, for the Germanic mentality that gave birth to the myth of *Ragnarök*, the monsters of the poem were the *only* appropriate enemies for a great hero, and thus shifted *Beowulf* from the irrelevant fringes to the very centre of the Anglo-Saxon thought-world. This naturally encouraged a pre-existent tendency to square the poem with what else was known of the 'serious' levels of Anglo-Saxon thought – chiefly the Latin scholarship of the Church. Secondly, Tolkien went far towards vindicating the structure of the poem by arguing that it was a balance of contrasting and interlocking halves. His thesis not only convinced many critics but inspired them to follow his example, with the result that Tolkien's own position has been outflanked. Whereas previous generations of scholars, Tolkien included, had been quite prepared to explain what they considered structural and stylistic blemishes as interpolations, modern writers seek evidence of artistic refinement in some of the poem's least promising features.[25] As *Beowulf*'s appearance has come to seem less untidy, one of the few remaining reasons for disbelieving in a single literate authorship has been undermined. This is particularly important because, over the

same period, a determined attempt by A. B. Lord, F. P. Magoun and their pupils to prove that *Beowulf* and other such literature *was* orally composed seems to have met with defeat, at least on points. That Anglo-Saxon poetry contains 'oral formulae' such as were originally discovered by Milman Parry in Homer and the poetry of the southern Slavs is now agreed, but it has also been demonstrated that supposedly 'oral' formulae appear in undeniably literate contexts elsewhere, while close study of the way in which the *Beowulf* poet used formulae has made oral composition seem less and less plausible. Indeed modern critics have turned the tables on the 'Homeric' school. It is agreed that 'formular economy' and the precise repetition of substantial passages are typical of oral verse, but *Beowulf* is notably lacking in either; for the late Professor Campbell, the closest analogies to *Beowulf* in style of composition were to be found in late classical rather than in Homeric epic.[26]

Few English poems have grown as much in stature over the last sixty-five years as has *Beowulf*. More to our point, the development of *Beowulf* criticism since 1936 has made the poem seem more representative of learned culture in the age of its composition, and has strengthened the thesis that the poem was composed with pen, not harp, in hand (similar trends in the study of the other heroic poems have made it seem likely that the same is true of *Waldhere* and *Maldon*, if not *Finnsburh*). Both points have an immediate relevance for students of early English Christianity. If the poet belonged in any way to the mainstream of Christian Latin scholarship, as increasing numbers of critics suppose, it is obvious that he was Christian himself, and highly likely that he was some sort of priest. But the same is probably true even of an ability to write, if indeed the poet could write.[27]

Since the issue of literacy has not entered the debate over *Beowulf* as often as, perhaps, it might have done, it is worth giving this point some emphasis. It is scarcely open to argument that literacy reached the Anglo-Saxons with the coming of Christianity, and I do not think that the evidence will allow us to postulate much in the way of literacy outside the ranks of the clergy before 900.[28] We know of one unquestionably literate king before Alfred, the Irish-educated Aldrith of Northumbria. We also know that some lay noblemen learnt to read, apparently by being brought up in monasteries.[29] In Alfred's day, we know from Asser's *Life* that there were books of poems at the West Saxon court, but we do not know where, or by whom, they were written down, nor do we know what sort of poems they contained. In fact, Asser offers powerful evidence against a widespread lay literacy at least in ninth-century England. Despite what he represents as an altogether exceptional enthusiasm from an early age, Alfred did not learn to read until he was nearly forty, and Asser's description of the reaction of Alfred's judges to the royal injunction that they should all learn to read does not suggest that the West Saxon aristocracy altogether shared their ruler's enthusiasm.[30] There is nothing from early England to match the evidence for extensive lay literacy that we find in contemporary Ireland.[31] We do not even have the sort of evidence for literacy outside religious communities that is furnished on the Continent by the writing offices of the Frankish or Lombard

kings, or by the Carolingian court schools and *Hofbibliothek*. There are no identifiable Anglo-Saxon court manuscripts, even from the tenth century, and Anglo-Saxon charters were almost certainly the work of their clerical beneficiaries, or of the nearest religious house if the beneficiary were a layman, at least until after Alfred's day.[32] Anglo-Saxon England was a culture of what anthropologists call 'restricted literacy', and among several interesting features that it shared with African cultures under Islamic influence in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was an effective clerical monopoly of its education process.[33]

If, then, *Beowulf* is layman's work, it is a great rarity; and provided one takes a fairly broad view of what constituted a religious community in early Anglo-Saxon England (it would have to include cathedral *familiae* and several more dubious congregations, as we shall see), the historical evidence of the distribution of Anglo-Saxon literacy supports that school of critics who have felt that the leisured and expansive tone of the Old English epic argues composition in a religious community under classical, or at least biblical, inspiration.[34] At the very least, it is difficult in the circumstances to envisage a *Beowulf* poet who was barely tinged with Christian values, or even one who could write English but not read Latin, and it seems reasonable to proceed on the basis that the author of *Beowulf* was most probably a cleric, or an associate of clergy. We shall see that, even on an old-fashioned reading of the poem, this is by no means as unlikely as it might at first look.

The historical study of *Beowulf* over the last forty years has greatly encouraged the view that this and similar poems might represent many of the interests and values of the Anglo-Saxon warrior classes, to which Bede, for his own good reasons, does less than justice. At the same time, the critical study of the poem has brought us to the point when, for various reasons, it does look as though it may have belonged to the literary culture of early Anglo-Saxon Christianity. Meanwhile, scholars are more aware than they were that Bede's is only one impression, not necessarily the most representative, of what was going on in seventh- and eighth-century England. There are bound to be serious difficulties about suggesting that *Beowulf* can tell us as much about the world in which it originated as Bede, not least because we have very little direct evidence that *Beowulf* was considered representative of anything at the time, or even that it was much admired, whereas Bede's book was an instant best-seller. Nevertheless, in the light of the above trends in the study of *Beowulf*, it does look as though the poem might have important implications for our understanding of the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy, and in the light of what has also happened to the study of Bede, the point does seem to be worth investigating at this stage. It was Tolkien who suggested that '*Beowulf* is a historical document of the first order for the study of the mood and thought of the period, and one perhaps too little used by historians'.[35] It is time that historians once again took up the challenge. I wish therefore to examine the relevance of heroic literature, and especially *Beowulf*, for students of religious change in early England. I shall need to give my own answer to the question with which every Anglo-Saxon historian is one day faced: is *Beowulf*

sensibly described as a Christian poem? But in so doing I shall regard the nature of early English Christianity as still an open question, and one on which *Beowulf* itself may have as much bearing as Bede. This must not be a circular argument, but it will be one with two movable axes: the evidence of *Beowulf* and that of other sources must be taken in tandem.

II   The Religious Character of *Beowulf*

Even historians cannot be unaware that the religious character of *Beowulf* is a highly controversial subject. Despite such authoritative pronouncements as that of Professor Whitelock, the problem remains one of the most thoroughly trampled of all the critics' cabbage-patches. The published options range from the view that it is a thinly veiled illustration of sacrificial kingship to the suggestion that it is a rather less transparent allegory of Christian baptism. It is unnecessary, and would indeed be impossible, to discuss all such interpretations; but it might, perhaps, be helpful to review the features of the poem which have driven its critics to such diverse conclusions.

The first, and perhaps the biggest, difficulty in *Beowulf* is that there is a discrepancy between the practices ascribed to the protagonists and the sentiments that they express. Some of the practices are unmistakably pagan. Under pressure from Grendel, the Danes resort to the worship of idols. Beowulf's body is cremated; so is that of Hnaef in the Finnsburh episode, and thus, too, the Danes wished to honour Æschere. Neither practice was ever remotely tolerable in Christian circles.[36] On the other hand both the poet himself and his heroes refer to the power, providence, justice and generosity of a single God: 'Let the wise God, the holy Lord, adjudge the glory to whichever party he thinks fit,' says Beowulf. 'It is truthfully said', adds the poet within twenty lines, 'that mighty God has always ruled mankind.'[37] It has been argued that there is nothing very Christian about the God being invoked, but he is a good deal more like the Judaeo-Christian deity than he is like Woden, and it is hard to see where the poet got so uncompromisingly monotheistic a divinity, if not from the Bible.[38] The contradiction in the poem is at its most acute in the famous 'Excursus', where the Danes worship idols only a hundred lines after they have been entertained by a song about God's creation of the world. The poet goes on to condemn them for it, though not without a note of sympathy. To reject this passage as an interpolation does not, however, help matters, since it is only a microcosm of the difficulty raised by the entire poem: the poet seems to have known that his heroes were pagans, yet he was prepared to attribute to them some of the apparently Christian opinions that he held himself.[39]

Second, *Beowulf* can convincingly be argued to bear traces both of Christian homily and liturgy and of lingering pagan beliefs. Some of the poet's vocabulary – *forscrifan*, *candel*, *non* – seems clear evidence that he and his audience had been

exposed to the language of Latin Christianity.[40] On the other hand the way that he uses *eacen* to describe both the strength of the hero, the sword in the monster's lair, the lair itself and the dragon's treasure, suggests that he possessed a residual faith in pagan magic.[41] *Wyrd* in the poem is a notorious crux; at times, it seems that the poet was familiar with the Boethian concept of *Fortuna*; at others, as when *Dryhten* is described as *Wigspeda gewiofu* (weaver of victories), one is immediately reminded of the Germanic goddess of fate.[42]

Third, there is the paradox of the scriptural references. The references to the Bible are explicit enough, but they are confined to the early chapters of Genesis, with some possible mentions of the Last Judgement. Apart from the creation song, there are two references to the murder of Abel by Cain and one to the flood. It can be argued that the poet twice finds it necessary to say that Cain killed his brother, as if knowledge of the fact could not be taken for granted, and that in the manuscript that we have Cain is confused with Cham, son of Noah. On the other hand, it has also been pointed out that the poet possesses, and assumes, a considerable knowledge of the obscure corner of Genesis describing the descent of giants and monsters from Cain and their destruction by the flood.[43] After the flood, we hear no more: no Moses, no Isaiah, no Christ and no Paul. Clark Hall's famous remark that there was little in the poem to offend a 'pious Jew' has often been quoted, but so sparing are the citations even from the Old Testament that a pious Jew must have been scarcely less dissatisfied than a pious Christian.[44] It seems almost as though there were a conscious avoidance of New Testament doctrines like redemption. Any positive impact that the biblical references might otherwise have is therefore diminished by their limited range.

Finally, and crucially, there is a profound ambiguity in the ethical tone of the poem. It is both unquestionably 'secular' and almost idealistic. No first-time reader of *Beowulf* could fail to be struck by the pleasure it takes in the good things of life. We hear much about drinking and singing. Twenty-five lines dwell on the presents given by Hrothgar to Beowulf after the hero's first great success. When Beowulf lies dying, and Wiglaf is ransacking the treasure in the dragon's barrow, we are told that 'the messenger was in haste'; if so, the poet was not, because he devotes thirty lines to an account of what Wiglaf found.[45] Moreover, it has rightly been argued that *Beowulf* lacks anything like the triumphant confidence as regards death and the life after death of mainstream Anglo-Saxon Christian poetry; judgement is occasionally promised, but its outcome is either bad or uncertain. In what is perhaps the most famous passage of the entire poem, Beowulf consoles Hrothgar for the death of Æschere. 'It is better for everyone that he avenge his friend, rather than mourn him long. We must expect an end in this world; let him who can win glory before death; for a dead warrior, that is the best aftermath.' This is not necessarily a heathen sentiment, but it can scarcely be described as a wholly Christian one.[46] In all these respects, *Beowulf* resembles heroic literature in general, whether English, Germanic or Indo-European.

Yet against all of this one must set the elevated tone of the poem, which so impressed Klaeber and Chambers. This does seem to distinguish *Beowulf* from the *Nibelungenlied*, or from what Chambers called the 'wild heathenism' of the Norse. An impressive illustration of the essential 'idealism' of the Anglo-Saxon epic is furnished by its very last lines. 'It is right that men should honour their lord in words and cherish him in their thoughts, when he must depart from the body. Thus it was that the Geatas, his hearth-companions, mourned the fall of their Lord; they said that he was among all kings of the earth, the kindest and most gracious of men, the gentlest to his people, and the most eager for praise.' Klaeber, in a much-misquoted passage, was sufficiently moved to recognize features of a type of Christ in the hero. Even critics of the poem's Christianity have confessed to finding in it a 'perfect nobility that is hard to credit in pagan times'.[47] Faced with this fundamental ambivalence, scholars have been inclined to react subjectively. Some have ascribed the 'gentle nobility' of the poem to Christian influence, while others have credited its joy in the manly virtues of paganism. But Christianity can scarcely claim a monopoly of gentle nobility, any more than can paganism of the manly virtues. The truth is that we do not really know enough about the poetry of the pagan Anglo-Saxons to be sure that *Beowulf* is either similar or dissimilar to what had been composed before the coming of Christianity.

Not all these points are of equal weight, but they tend to balance each other out, and this is the main reason why agreement as to the religious character of Beowulf has been so difficult to reach. Instead of following critics into further controversy along these lines, historians might simply pause to consider the startling prospect which already confronts them. How is it that a presumably Christian, arguably clerical, pen has produced a work whose Christianity has been so controversial? It is, one suspects, the tension between a Christian authorship that is argued by literate composition and a seemingly less than whole-hearted religious commitment that has led several recent scholars to the view that the poem does have a Christian meaning, but that it is hidden, that *Beowulf* is an allegory with a Christian message. The allegorical exposition of Scripture was, after all, one of the dominant intellectual interests of the early Middle Ages, and students of *Beowulf* had been encouraged since 1936 to relate the poem to the more serious concerns of the age.[48]

It now seems unlikely that any allegorical solution to the problems of *Beowulf* will command assent, partly because it does not make adequate sense of the poem, and partly because it does not make much sense of the principles of early medieval allegory. But even if such an approach does fail, it is to the credit of its exponents that they have at least recognized the existence of a problem. Most modern scholars, like R. W. Chambers before the war, have been sufficiently influenced by the Christian features of the poem, as described above, to regard it as an acceptable Christian product. Yet the fact is that, in *Beowulf*, a great deal of space has been devoted to the warlike deeds of a pagan Scandinavian, in a poem which seems to be brushed, rather than suffused, by the Bible, and which is dominated, as Tolkien

argued, by the sense that bygone days, however heathen or hopeless, were also noble. Much of *Beowulf* may edify (like Hrothgar's 'sermon'), but much of it does not. It is widely agreed today that *Beowulf* is about the qualities of the 'noble pagan'; few have remembered Chadwick's legitimate objection that a Christian poet of the period had no business to be celebrating the secular virtues of noble pagans, and the fact is that, as compared with the ninth-century *Waltharius*, or the thirteenth-century *Nibelungenlied*, the *Beowulf* poet is unusually explicit about the pagan rites that his heroes celebrated. There are real difficulties here, dramatically highlighted by the fact that two such acknowledged experts as Professor Whitelock and Dr Sisam can come to diametrically opposed conclusions as to the level of Christianity in the poem.[49]

III   Christianity and Secular Germanic Culture

What the debate perhaps calls for at this stage is something more in the way of objective criteria for scholarly judgement: some further study of what Christianity would have meant in eighth-century England, and of how the Christians of the period might have reacted to *Beowulf*. So far as I am aware, there has never been an extended study of the orthodox attitude to heroic literature in the vernacular, to set alongside the standard works of Marrou, Laistner and Henry Chadwick on Christianity and classical culture.[50] It is perhaps appropriate that something of the sort should be attempted in a Cornell volume. But merely to list the rules will not be enough in itself. We shall have to see whether the rules were altogether obeyed, and this is a question which historians, dazzled by the brilliance of Bede, have not always answered with much interest or sympathy. I propose to ask, therefore, first of all what the orthodox position regarding literature like *Beowulf* was, and secondly, how orthodoxy fared in seventh- and eighth-century England.

   For these purposes, there is one crucial piece of evidence, which has long been familiar to historians and critics, but whose implications have never been fully appreciated, because its historical context has not been examined. In a letter of *c*.797 to Hygebald, bishop of Lindisfarne, the Northumbrian scholar, Alcuin, wrote:

> Let the word of God be read at the priestly repast. There should the reader be heard, not the harpist (*citharistam*); the sermons of the Fathers, not the songs of pagans (*carmina gentilium*). What has Ingeld to do with Christ? The House is narrow, it cannot hold both. The King of Heaven wishes to have no fellowship with so-called kings, who are pagan and lost; for the eternal king reigns in Heaven, the lost pagan laments in Hell. Hear the voices of readers in your houses, not the crowd of revellers in the streets.[51]

The Ingeld of this passage is easily identified. He must be the Heathobard prince, whose marriage to Freawaru, princess of his hereditary Danish enemies, resulted in further bloodshed and divided loyalties; the story is familiar to us through a garbled version in the later Danish historian, Saxo Grammaticus, as well as through the English poems, *Widsith* and *Beowulf* itself.[52] Here, then, a story which actually constitutes one of the digressions in *Beowulf*, and which must have involved some of the same sort of subject-matter, is as roundly condemned as any concern of monks. Alcuin's remarks thus have an obvious bearing on the subject under discussion. They have been dismissed on the grounds that Alcuin was a fanatic, that he says nothing about the written composition of literature about Ingeld, and that his ban could not have extended to such a poem as *Beowulf*, even if it did proscribe other heroic literature, such as *Finnsburh*.[53] But Alcuin was not a fanatic. His letter is simply a vigorous expression of cultural currents that ran right through the Church of the early medieval West. Written or unwritten, we have seen that *Beowulf* is substantially 'secular' in much of its tone, and its concern is with pagans. It is possible, by examining the tradition which Alcuin was articulating, to show that, on both counts, *Beowulf* would probably have been considered every bit as unsuitable as any poem about Ingeld.

In the first place, Alcuin is representing the tradition of monastic and canonical hostility to the cultivation of secular literature in ecclesiastical contexts. For example, in a seventh-century rule for nuns, which has been plausibly connected with the circle of St Columbanus, we find: 'There is to be silence, so far as concerns the otiose, frivolous, scurrilous, base and evil-minded tales (*fabulis*)', there are to be no *fabulae superfluae*, and an account is to be kept of 'otiose words'. Similar provisions appear in most monastic rules, including that of St Benedict.[54] The canons of Church councils speak the same language; thus, the enormously influential third council of Toledo (589): 'Because otiose *fabulae* are frequently put forward at tables, a reading of the divine scriptures is to be added to all priestly repasts, for this purpose, that their souls be edified, and that superfluous tales are forbidden.' The eleventh-century English canonist, Archbishop Wulfstan (1002–23), echoed these norms when he specified in his 'Canons of Edgar' that no priest was to be an *eal-scop* (presumably an ale-minstrel).[55]

The evidence in fact suggests that these were already the views of the earlier English churchmen, quite apart from Alcuin, though some of them have been wrongly supposed to have been sympathetic to literature such as *Beowulf*. The English bishops, meeting at Clovesho in 746/7, forbade priests to chatter in church in the manner of secular poets, or corrupt the sacred text by 'tragic' sound; this decree hardly suggests official endorsement of traditional forms of versification.[56] Bede himself is known to have been interested in the vernacular and in English verse, but the only piece of his that we have is exceedingly devout, and there is no evidence that the *carmina* that he knew were any different. Of Cædmon, the late seventh-century Whitby cowherd and putative founder of vernacular religious poetry, Bede

writes that he had received his gift from God, and hence, 'he could compose no frivolous and futile poetry at all, but only those things that pertained to religion suited his pious tongue.' (In Cædmon's reported list of further works, there is nothing remotely like *Beowulf*.) The chapter which immediately follows in Bede's *History* includes among the sins for which Coldingham was (in Bede's view, justly) condemned, banqueting, drinking and 'fabulating'. Only three chapters before, Bede had used the word *fabulae* of stories about runes. Twice, in his commentary on Samuel, Bede seems to condemn *libri gentilium, fabulae saeculares*.[57] It does not look as though he favoured the cultivation of anything other than directly religious verse. Aldhelm is another whose approval of secular verse has been assumed. A famous story in William of Malmesbury, writing in the early twelfth century and quoting King Alfred as his authority, told how this finest of English poets used to sing a poem at the bridges leading out of Malmesbury, and, by gradually introducing scriptural matter, delay his congregation's precipitate departure from church. But it has not been sufficiently emphasized that the poem in question was regarded by William certainly, and probably by Alfred, as trivial, and that both sources felt it incumbent upon themselves to explain why such 'frivolous' and 'ludicrous' material was necessary; that is why we have the story. Alfred's attitude tells us nothing direct about Aldhelm's general style of composition, but the whole tendency of the passage is such as to suggest that Aldhelm regarded Scripture itself as the proper subject of verse, and that he would have wished to see the edifying element more obvious than it is in *Beowulf*.[58]

In the nature of the evidence, none of these texts can be shown to proscribe *Beowulf* as such. It is not certain by any means that every *fabula* referred to in the canonical sources conceals an illicit fancy for secular literature, whether classical or Germanic. But these references do establish that Alcuin's remarks draw upon a recognizable tradition. It seems to go back to the original Christian attitude to the pagan classics, as unforgettably enunciated by Tertullian, Jerome and Gregory the Great. Like Dr Hunter Blair, I have the impression that 'What has Ingeld to do with Christ?' is a conscious echo of 'How can Horace go with the Psalter?'[59] If these were the priorities of the religious life, it is hard to see how *Beowulf* could have been tolerated in its present form, for all its 'Christian colouring'.

It could be argued, however, that these are the standards expected of clerics and religious communities; they did not, perhaps, apply to laymen or to the royal courts, which might have been expected to appreciate the poem. This argument cannot be pressed too far. A literate *Beowulf* is, as we have seen, likely to have been the work of someone who was at least on the fringes of clerical society and, in the early Middle Ages, there was no independent lay ethic, such as developed later, in the thirteenth century. On the contrary laymen, and kings especially, came under increasing pressure to conform to sacerdotal norms.[60] So far as this concerns secular literature, we find Gregory the Great, in his notorious letter to Desiderius of Vienne (601), writing of classical verses unfit to be recited even by a religious layman; and Jonas,

bishop of Orleans (818–43), in a work entitled *De Institutione laicali* uses much the same language as the canons already quoted, and cites, on this point, a sermon of Bede's, which was presumably addressed originally to clergy. He criticizes especially those whose delight in vain and obscene confabulation is nowhere greater than when they go to church.[61] The most significant illustration of this point, for our purposes, comes from the Carolingian royal family itself. In a famous passage, Einhard describes how Charlemagne (768–814) had written down and committed to memory the 'barbarian and most ancient songs, in which the deeds and wars of kings of old were sung'. Yet Louis the Pious, Charlemagne's son and successor (814–40) thought otherwise. According to his biographer Thegan, Louis 'never raised his voice in laughter, nor did he have *themilici*, clowns, actors or harpists at his table on great festivals, and he never showed his white teeth in a smile'; further, 'the poetic songs of pagans (*carmina gentilia*), which he had learnt in his youth, he rejected, nor did he wish them to be read, learned or taught.'[62] Hence, if we use the evidence of Einhard to show that a Christian court might commission literature like *Beowulf*, we ought also to acknowledge the evidence of Thegan that, according to an influential segment of Christian opinion, it should not have done.

The second current of opinion that finds expression in Alcuin's remarks is the teaching of the early medieval western Church on unbaptized pagans. Ingeld was unbaptized, and had gone, thought Alcuin, to hell; it was for this reason, and not because he was a Dane or a coward, that Alcuin considered his story to be unsuitable material for a Christian audience. Beowulf himself, and the other heroes of the poem, were open to the same objection. St Paul had, of course, envisaged that Gentiles could appreciate moral truths by natural law, and would be judged on that basis; western writers like Augustine and Gregory were never prepared to assert that God had condemned all pagans.[63] Nevertheless, the theological tradition of the West, taking its inspiration from Augustine, discouraged sanguine speculation about the fate of the unbaptized, and emphatically opposed the indulgent celebration of pagan virtues.[64] There was no systematic case made at this stage for the redemption of the unbelieving, such as we find in association with the 'new' secular literatures of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[65] Bede, confronting anew the challenge of the Pelagian, Julian of Eclanum, admitted that there had been just men among the unbaptized, like Job; for Bede, however, such men were important mainly as illustrations of the independent activity of Divine Grace, not of justification by human virtue. The trouble with Beowulf, and also, apparently, with Ingeld, is that although they may, or may not, have had virtues, there was no suggestion that they had Grace.[66]

This is all the more remarkable since the conversion of the Celtic and Germanic barbarians naturally raised the problem of the condemned ancestor in an acute form. The terrible old Frisian King Radbod stepped back from the edge of St Wulfram's font on overhearing a remark to the effect that he would not now join his ancestors in damnation, and declared that 'he could not lose the company of his predecessors,

and sit with a small number in heaven.'[67] Yet no evidence really suggests that the Church's teaching was modified as a matter of official policy, or that the experience made any difference to its attitude to literature like *Beowulf*. In his correspondence with his fellow-countrymen, St Boniface played heavily on the irony that the purity of the damned Saxons should shame the sexual licence of Christian Mercian kings, and appealed with passion for assistance in the salvation of so many lost souls, but in each case it is the fact of damnation that dominates his consciousness. There is a lot of difference between this attitude and that of *Beowulf*, in which pagan virtues are praised over 3000 lines, with a brief passing reference to their probable futility.[68]

It has in fact been suggested that the flexible missionary methods advocated for the Anglo-Saxons by Pope Gregory the Great are relevant to the survival in England of a heroic tradition, focusing upon a pagan past.[69] Just possibly, the famous suggestion that pagan shrines and festivals be converted to Christian use may have a bearing on the adaptation of *scopcraeft* to the teaching of the Bible, by such as Aldhelm and Cædmon, but it cannot be read as an endorsement for the honouring of pagan ancestors in poetry or anywhere else. Archbishop Theodore (669–90) was soaked in the writings of the great pope, yet his Penitential specifies that when churches are converted, the *cadavera infidelium* interred therein are to be flung out.[70] Another close student of Gregory's mission literature was Pope Nicholas I (858–67), the greatest canonist of the early Middle Ages, who faced a series of questions, including one on pagan ancestors, from the newly converted Bulgars. He showed typical Gregorian flexibility in, for instance, permitting the wearing of trousers, and in writing that, though jokes and profanities were to be discouraged at all times, the Bulgars could not be expected to lose their notorious sense of humour overnight, so they could make a start by being serious in Lent. But when it came to ancestors, Nicholas was firm: 'As for your kinsmen who died unbelieving, one may not pray for them, because of the sin of incredulity, according to John the Apostle, who said, "There is a sin unto death; I say that it may not be prayed for": a sin unto death is that of those who die in the same sin.'[71] Thus, while individual missionaries may well have told their flocks not to despair of the salvation of their ancestors, there is, as Chadwick rightly argued, no evidence for a school of 'liberal churchmen' in early medieval Europe, and such evidence as we have indicates, as we shall see, that those who indulged a taste for secular literature about pagan heroes were not so much liberal as drunk.[72] Once again, Alcuin cannot be considered unrepresentative of the mainstream tradition, and once again, it is hard to see how *Beowulf* can have been exempt from its provisions.

To the arguments that I have been presenting so far there are, it is true, an important set of objections. Suppose that Alcuin were consciously reflecting the conventional ecclesiastical hostility to classical letters: the work of Laistner, Leclercq, de Lubac and others has now revealed how very artificial such hostility was. Alcuin himself wrote slightingly of *Vergiliaca mendacia* on more than one occasion, as did his biographer, yet Alcuin was obviously extremely familiar with Vergil's works.[73]

Should we not, therefore, take his strictures upon songs about Ingeld with similar measures of salt? St Augustine, in his *De Doctrina Christiana*, had accepted the educational necessity of the classics and, adapting a metaphor of Origen's, had taught that profane literature could have a moral significance, as the spoils of the Egyptians had benefited the fleeing Israelites. Hraban Maur, pupil of Alcuin and master of the school at Fulda (822–47), used the same argument in his tract on the teaching of clergy. Theodulf, bishop of Orleans (798–818), himself the most gifted poet of the Carolingian Renaissance, wrote of finding truths in the 'frivola . . . plurima' of classical verse.[74] Yet I doubt whether these arguments are relevant to the case of *Beowulf*, or associated literature.

In the first place, even if *Beowulf* itself were agreed to possess a single edifying message, the secular apparatus of the poem, which we have noted above, remains excessive. Hraban wrote that whatever in gentile books 'is superfluous, concerning idols, love, the care of secular things, that we shall cut off'; much of *Beowulf* would have been disqualified under this rule.[75] Secondly, the classics might be educationally indispensable, inasmuch as they were inextricably entangled with the whole culture of the Christian Fathers; but nothing suggests that the vernacular had any educational utility before the days of Alfred's England, and when Alfred did eventually find a use for *Saxonica carmina*, there was no need, as there was in Latin, to use pagan stereotypes rather than freshly composed religious poetry, which could edify while it instructed.[76] Third, and crucially, the western Fathers from Jerome to Hraban were wrestling with the problem of a pre-existent corpus of classical literature, the use and memory of which could not be blotted out. But when writers like these wrote of searching the dungheap of the classics for gold, they did not endorse the creation of more dung that more gold be dug out.[77] Thus, there is nothing to suggest that anyone in the western tradition would have approved the use of original compositions, such as *Beowulf*, in preference to more direct methods of instruction. Hraban Maur at Fulda was indirectly responsible for no fewer than three major monuments of Old High German verse, but all are versifications of the Gospels which make the message more accessible, rather than new gentile books, conveying it by hints. Moreover, Otfrid, the author of one, and a devoted pupil of Hraban's, actually wrote in his preface that he had written his translation as an alternative to secular literature, to 'the sound of useless things', the 'obscene song of laymen'.[78]

The objections to any comparisons between the use made of classical literature by the western Fathers under a smokescreen of ostensible disapproval and the cultivation of literature like *Beowulf* are underlined by the evidence of material survival. The libraries and scriptoria that have preserved for us most of what we know about Latin antiquity have also bequeathed from the early period one short and truncated Old High German lay, the *Hildebrandslied*, and one full-length epic, albeit in Latin, the *Waltharius*, from the Continent.[79] From England they have left us a single full-length vernacular epic, *Beowulf*, preserved in one manuscript which seems to owe its

existence to the fact that it is a compendium of the monstrous; three other fragments of 'secular' poetry, *Waldhere*, *Finnsburh* and *Maldon* (all, be it noted, from outside the medium of the main poetic codices); and the strange 'catalogues' of the Exeter Book, *Widsith* and *Deor*.[80] In none of these cases, except perhaps the very last, is there any suggestion that 'secular' themes were used to put across Christian messages. On the other hand, almost ten times as much unmistakably religious poetry has survived in England, and the proportion on the Continent is far higher. To me, these dismal proportions tell their own story, as indeed does the disappearance of Charlemagne's collection. I think it is one of severe ideological pressures on the channels of transmission. We cannot at least ignore the fact of disappearance, nor fail to ask why it was so.

So much for the orthodox position. I do not pretend that theory and practice are the same thing. But, set in its ideological context, it seems that Alcuin's famous letter may, after all, have important implications for the study of *Beowulf*. Those critics who have supposed that *Beowulf* has comparatively little to do with Christianity have a better case, in theory, than modern authorities have usually been willing to grant. On the other hand, the tendency among scholars over the last thirty years to integrate the composition of the Anglo-Saxon epic with what else is known of the learned culture of early English Christianity is open to some serious objections. The patristic works that have been ransacked for clues to the poet's attitude to wealth, sin and judgement also contain what are (by Byzantine or later medieval standards, for example) surprisingly tough provisions on the cultivation of secular literature and on the salvation of pre-Christian ancestors, and I am not sure whether we can divorce the Augustinian hierarchy of letters, or Augustinian ecclesiology, from the patristic legacy to Anglo-Saxon England.[81] Nor can it be assumed as readily as it often has been that all these works were widely known to the earliest English scholars. It is both 'dangerous' to regard such centres as Malmesbury, Jarrow and York as typical, and unsatisfactory to assume that books known to the greatest scholars necessarily circulated widely. Writing the preface to his Genesis commentary for Bishop Acca of Hexham, Bede said that much had been written on the subject by Basil, Ambrose and Augustine, but, 'because all this is so copious and deep that the books can scarcely be acquired except by the rich, and they are so profound that they can scarcely be examined except by the learned, your holiness enjoined upon me the task' (of making selections).[82]

In short, it is often accepted today that *Beowulf* represents the work of an Englishman with 'average' patristic culture. But we know what a product of the library at York thought of literature of this type; we may strongly suspect that the most distinguished son of Jarrow will have shared his opinion; and we have no reason to believe that the outstanding Malmesbury scholar thought any differently. If we are still to believe that *Beowulf* belongs within the same tradition, then two stipulations are surely necessary. First, patristic influence must be demonstrated and not taken for granted; we must have something concrete to set against what we know

of Alcuin's position. Second, if we are to accept that there is such influence upon *Beowulf*, it must be admitted that something rather extraordinary had happened to orthodox priorities in the poet's hands, and in that case we must search not only for the Mediterranean legacy, but also for what it was, in the insular tradition, that had distorted the perspective. Otherwise, Alcuin may be left in possession of the field, as a representative member of a flexible, but not a liberal, tradition that ran from Augustine via Gregory, Bede and the school of York to Alcuin himself, his pupil Hraban and the school of Fulda. The corollary is that if we are to understand how *Beowulf*, and other such literature, came to be composed by a Christian, even a clerical, pen, the ideological heritage of western Christianity in the Middle Ages is the wrong place to look.

   That, however, is as far as I am prepared to go in this direction. Despite the official opposition to Germanic secular literature, *Beowulf* did find its way into writing in an age when literacy was largely a preserve of the clergy, and was certainly a Christian monopoly. This anomaly, if anomaly it be, requires explanation. We now need, therefore, to ask how widely the orthodox position was in fact followed.

IV   The Social and Cultural Context of Secular Germanic Literature

There have been two notable attempts in recent years to confront Chadwick's case against an early medieval 'liberal Christianity' by looking at what particular classes of churchmen really thought about the noble pagans of their heroic past. Professor Donahue has sought to explain the existence of a major early English Christian poem about noble pagans by invoking the more easygoing attitude towards the pre-Christian past that was characteristic of the Irish. Professor Donahue's evidence that the Pauline doctrine of natural law had taken root among the Irish, and flourished there more vigorously than elsewhere in the early medieval West, is most convincing and can be supplemented. One of the early Irish synods, for example, declared: 'If we find the judgement of the heathens good, which their good nature teaches them, and it is not displeasing to God, we shall keep them.' Early Irish legend tended to lay special emphasis upon the virtues of such noble pagans as Cormac and Morand, and one might add that early Irish hagiography offers examples of the 'baptism' of dead heroes; in Tirechan's seventh-century Life, St Patrick baptized the grandson of Cass, son of Glass, by raising him temporarily from a grave in which he had already spent a hundred years. In Germany, St Boniface had difficulties with an Irish heretic named Clement, who taught that Christ had freed all souls when harrowing hell, 'believers and unbelievers, praisers of God and worshippers of idols'.[83] Given this evidence that the early Irish made a series of efforts to reconcile their past and its heroes with the new dispensation, it is not at all surprising that during the seventh

and eighth centuries they were committing the Ulster Cycle, with all its pagan heroes, to writing, and at the same time adopting the learned legacy of western Christianity. It was believed that the *Táin Bo Cuailnge* was exported in exchange for Isidore's *Etymologiae*.[84]

In view of what happened in Ireland itself, it is a very reasonable suggestion that *Beowulf*, like much else in early Anglo-Saxon civilization, was directly or indirectly influenced by Irish ideas, and specifically by Irish tolerance of a pagan past. The poem's restricted range of biblical allusions are like those of the 'Testament of Morand'; the confusion of Cain and Cham was widespread in Ireland (though it was also made by Alcuin himself); monsters in Celtic stories do sometimes move freely beneath the surface of lakes, as they do in *Beowulf*, whereas, in the poem's Scandinavian analogues, their lair is located in a cave behind a waterfall. It is perhaps significant that Alcuin's suspicions about an interest in the deeds of Ingeld focused themselves upon Irish-founded Lindisfarne, where, as Dr Mayr-Harting has recently shown, something similar may have happened one hundred years earlier.[85] Conversion by the Irish may have made literature like *Beowulf* more acceptable. It is unfortunately impossible, however, to establish any connection between Celtic influence and what little we know of heroic literature on the Continent, such as Charlemagne's collection of *barbara et antiquissima carmina*, and plausible though Professor Donahue's case is, it might therefore be unwise to depend too heavily upon the 'Irish solution'.

Meanwhile, Professor Benson has argued that the outlook of the Irish was shared by the English missionaries to Germany, and that they thought of the kindred pagans of the continental mainland not with horror, but with 'interest, sympathy, occasionally even admiration'. There is indeed evidence, among St Boniface's converts as among the early Irish, of a lingering interest in heroic ancestors, and it was in St Boniface's own Fulda, a generation after his death, that our sole manuscript of the *Hildebrandslied* appears to have been written.[86] At the same time, we have seen that Boniface himself is unlikely to have disagreed with Alcuin about the fate of the unbaptized or the impropriety of extolling their virtues at length; he was scandalized by Clement's excessively generous interpretation of the 'Harrowing of Hell'. There is really no good evidence of a theory of the noble pagan among the English missionaries, such as we find among the Irish and such as we could use to explain the existence of *Beowulf*.

It thus seems unlikely that either the Irish or the continental connection will solve our problem on its own. But Professors Donahue and Benson have introduced important new elements into the debate over *Beowulf*. Their arguments put a new premium not upon hypothetical doctrinal foundations for a literature of pagan heroism, so much as on concrete evidence of an interest in it. In each case, this interest has a recognizable historical context and a cultural rationale. For the Irish, the key condition was the vigorous conservatism of Celtic learned culture, preserved as it was by a powerful and privileged class of professionals, the *filid*.[87] Among the

English missionaries and their converts, we are confronted with an understandable determination not to be separated from a past that was closely linked to national origins (the Anglo-Saxon royal genealogies, as we shall see, offer good evidence of a surviving awareness that the northern Continent was part of the English past). Whether we agree or disagree with the arguments of these scholars, we can take our cue from them and look again, both at the evidence for a cult of the heroic in early Anglo-Saxon England, and at the social and cultural context in which it is found.

I therefore return, once again, to Alcuin's letter. Often as this has been quoted, no significant attention has ever been paid, so far as I know, to the context in which Alcuin's strictures occur. The letter is full of forebodings of the Apocalypse, when there shall be no use for precious stones or for gold or fine clothes. Alcuin stresses that what matters is the ministry, not banquets; where is the honour in groaning tables, when Christ starves at the door? Paupers should be fed rather than actors; drunkenness and pompous vestments are insane. Alcuin wrote more than once in this vein; even the abbot of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow was given a warning similar to Hygebald's (we know that his predecessor had actually sent abroad for a *citharista*). The archbishop of York was rebuked for parading around the countryside with so large a number of retainers that he was severely straining the resources of the monasteries that were obliged to put him up.[88] It is not certain that any of these men were actually guilty of such excesses, but it is revealing that these criticisms should have been voiced, even in general terms, suggesting as they do that, as well as indulging a taste for worldly literature, the Northumbrian Church had adopted worldly standards.

The connection is borne out by the very similar criticisms that we find earlier in the eighth century. The Council of Clovesho (747), whose opposition to secular rhythms of declamation I quoted earlier, also sees the danger in a wider context. Two of its clauses refer to the conduct of secular business by churchmen, two to the wearing of secular dress, two to associations with laymen, whether within the monastery or on lay ground. Two clauses condemn drunkenness in clerical ranks, and others castigate the patronage of 'ludicrous arts' in monasteries: poets, harpists, musicians and the staging of horse-races on religious festivals. The decrees of this council appear to link up with a letter from St Boniface to Archbishop Cuthbert of Canterbury (740–61), denouncing the various abuses in the English Church that had come to his ears. They included foolish customs in dress, clerics going hunting and carrying arms, and the episcopal custom of not only getting drunk oneself, but also of forcing others to do so, as, says the saint, neither the Franks, nor the Lombards, nor the Romans, nor the Greeks, but only the English do.[89] As early as 679–80, a council in Rome on the affairs of the English Church prohibited the bearing of arms by clergymen, jokes, games and the patronage of harpists and *symphoniaca*; while Archbishop Theodore's Penitential actually begins with a complex statute on the rights, as well as the wrongs, of drunken vomiting among the clergy.[90]

Into this context I would like to bring a further piece of crucial evidence as to the state of affairs in the eighth-century English Church: the letter which Bede wrote in the last year of his life (734) to his pupil, Archbishop Ecgberht of York. Like Boniface and Alcuin, Bede was bitterly dissatisfied, and it looks as though he was objecting to some of the same things. In particular, he felt that there were too few bishops and too many monasteries. The large size of the Northumbrian dioceses guaranteed a healthy episcopal bank-balance, but it did nothing to help the souls of the faithful, who saw their bishop once a year, if then. 'Moreover it is rumoured abroad about certain bishops that they serve Christ in such a manner that they have with them no men of any religion or continence, but rather those who are given to laughter, jests, tales (*fabulae*), feasting, and the other attractions of a lax life, and who daily feed the stomach with feasts more than the soul on the heavenly sacrifice.' The proliferation of monasteries was even more sinister since many of their inhabitants were monks only in name: officers of the king have secured chartered endowments from their grateful master, on the pretence that they were going to found monasteries, and then simply settling down as abbots in charge of a motley band of retainers. In addition – 'a very ugly and unheard of spectacle' – the very same men were now occupied with wives and the procreation of children, to whom they hoped to pass on their foundation in hereditary right.[91]

Making every allowance for the highly coloured tone of this letter, there is no doubt that Bede's description is substantially accurate. The existence of 'secular' monasteries is attested by a canon of the Council of Clovesho, which says that bishops should visit those monasteries – 'if it be right to call them that' – which, because of human greed, cannot be forced to change to a Christian way of life, but have been held by presumptuous laymen. Archbishop Ecgberht's own *Dialogue* faces the question of how to partition a private monastery among the available heirs of the incumbent abbot. There is also the impressive evidence of extant charters and memoranda from the eighth and ninth centuries, revealing the hereditary principle at work in the houses of God.[92] As for allegedly worldly bishops: the whole career of Bishop Wilfrid, to which I shall return, is prima facie an illustration of Bede's remarks.

Seventh- and eighth-century sources thus seem to bring Alcuin's suspicions into focus. Englishmen in the Church were evidently listening to literature of the Ingeld type and patronizing the harpists, whose stock in trade such stories were; they were also leading the same kind of splendid life as we find described in *Beowulf*. They had taken with some enthusiasm to the professions of monk and bishop, but without bothering to abandon traditional patterns of behaviour. The prominence of drink is especially notable; more than most societies, the early Germans sought a social lubricant in alcohol.[93] I would suggest that, in these circumstances, the survival of a secular literary tradition is not so hard to understand.

The significance of these developments and their relevance to the understanding of *Beowulf* can be underlined by once again invoking the evidence from the

continental Church, used above to explain the hostility of Alcuin to secular literary tastes. Continental scholars have had more to say than their English counterparts about secular and hereditary monasteries; they have recognized in them an aspect of the regime of the *Eigenkirche* or private church; and whatever the origins of the system, it is clear enough that there very often was a connection between the government of a monastery and the family of its founding abbot. Iona itself, where ten or eleven of the first thirteen abbots were members of St Columba's own branch of the Uí Neill dynasty, is a well-known Irish example. In Gaul, the important abbey of Nivelles was ruled, during the seventh century, by the widow, daughter and granddaughter of Pippin of Landen, the ancestor of Charlemagne, and there is no reason to believe that this was very unusual.[94] Recent studies by German scholars have also focused themselves upon the exalted status of early medieval bishops, and it is in these terms that Professor Mayr-Harting has explained Wilfrid's own attitude to his bishopric. Two famous cases which scandalized St Boniface in the mid-eighth century were Milo, who was bishop both of Trier (in succession to his father) and of Rheims, but who was probably never ordained, and who met his death at the tusks of a boar; and Gewilib of Mainz, another to inherit his see from his father, who was deposed only when he insisted upon personally avenging the latter's death in battle against the Saxons.[95]

The continental evidence also indicates the connection between these features of Church government and the cultivation of secular literature. At St Gall, in the early tenth century, Ekkehard I, whose family was closely linked to the abbacy, wrote a version of the *Waltharius* (possibly not the one we possess) as a school exercise.[96] Archbishop Fulk of Rheims (881–95), of aristocratic origin and a very active bishop, could refer in the same breath to a letter of Gregory the Great on Frankish kingship, and to 'Teutonic *books* about a certain king Hermenric': the reference must be to the Gothic king of the fourth century, who subsequently acquired a grim reputation in Germanic saga (as it was certainly grim for Fulk) and who appears in *Beowulf*.[97] The house of Wildeshausen in Saxony was founded, in the mid-ninth century, by Count Waldbert, grandson of the Duke Widukind who had led the original Saxon resistance to Charlemagne's brutal conquest. Waldbert's charter specified that one of his bodily heirs should always be the *rector et gubernator* of the abbey, and he became abbot himself. In that capacity, he commissioned Rudolf of Fulda to advertise his new foundation's most precious asset, the relics of St Alexander; and Rudolf, whose house of Fulda had, as we have seen, produced a manuscript of the *Hildebrandslied* two generations earlier, thought it appropriate to preface his account with a long description of the virtues and victories of the pagan ancestors of the Saxons. Thus Wildeshausen had come to represent both family interests in the Christian future and family traditions from the pagan past.[98] On the Continent as in England, therefore, where we find clerics living in some ways like heroes out of Germanic saga, we also find literature like *Beowulf* being composed and appreciated.

As well as reinforcing the connection, moreover, continental scholarship offers a rationale for all these developments. An outstanding feature of European research since the war has been the generation of a new interest in the social and cultural history of the aristocracies that dominated barbarian Europe, and can be seen to have influenced the structure and civilization of the Church. The *Eigenkirche* is now acknowledged to be, among other things, 'a manifestation of Germanic *Adels-herrschaft* in the . . . Middle Ages'.[99] The social prominence of bishops can be understood as arising from their background as noblemen, and their sheer political and military importance in a developing feudal society.[100] The situation as regards the continental Church is summarized in lapidary terms by Professor Karl Schmid: 'Adel, Kirche und Königsdienst bildeten die Lebensbereiche dieser Geistlichen.' The thought-world of the early medieval clergy was dominated by conceptions of nobility, Church and service to the king, and, Professor Schmid could almost have added, in that order.[101] Naturally the characteristic literature of the early Germanic aristocracy is to be found written in these circles.

A similar trend has yet to establish itself in Anglo-Saxon studies. Much of the canonical and literary evidence from the seventh and eighth centuries that I have been quoting is traditionally taken as indicating the 'decline' of the Anglo-Saxon Church, during and after the age of Bede. But it seems likely that British historians might have much to learn from the way in which the character of ecclesiastical life on the Continent has been related by European scholars to aristocratic customs and values, and that the results could have an important bearing on the way in which we understand the emergence and survival of an early English heroic literature. I therefore return to the 'abuses' denounced by Bede, Boniface and Alcuin, partly in order to conclude investigations into the probable context of *Beowulf*, but also in the interests of taking a rather less negative view of eighth-century developments in the English Church than has often been fashionable.

Probably the most important of these abuses was the family monastery – an institution perhaps better called by its Anglo-Saxon term, *minster*. Bede describes some at least of the recipients of bogus endowments as noblemen, and I think that we should accept that the foundations he so much disliked were essentially expressions of the understandable sense of kindred in the Anglo-Saxon upper classes. To associate the government of a religious house with the members of 'Founder's Kin' came naturally to the Anglo-Saxons, as to many other societies, Celtic and Germanic. As the *Beowulf* poet put it, 'sibb aefre ne maeg wiht onwendan þam þe wel þenceð '.[102] It would probably be wrong, moreover, to regard every such *minster* as a den of vice. No doubt there were abuses, and 'secular encroachment' could, in the long run, be disastrous, as the tenth-century reformers asserted; but several apparently dubious houses seem to have achieved high standards of Christian culture.[103] The early ninth-century *De Abbatibus* of Æthelwulf makes it quite clear that this otherwise unknown Northumbrian *minster* was ruled more than once by members of the founder's family, yet the impression given in the poem is of a serious and sober

community. We hear of books illuminated and ornaments made, while the poet's Latin, if not exactly a model of lucidity, is certainly not unlearned.[104] It is likely that it was in the form of such foundations that Christianity reached most parts of the British countryside, and its best monuments may be the surviving early Anglo-Saxon churches. Deerhurst in Gloucestershire is a particularly striking example of a church whose architecture appears to have benefited in the early ninth century from the patronage of a noble Mercian family, which treated minsters as part of the family property.[105]

Of particular importance for the student of *Beowulf*, which has so much to say of kings and kingship, is the extent to which monasticism and royalty were integrated. Northumbria offers the examples of Coldingham, where we find King Egfrith (671–85) being entertained to dinner by his aunt, the abbess, and Whitby, a centre distinguished (unlike Coldingham) for its piety, where three generations of North-umbrian princesses in the seventh century presided over the burial-places of Edwin and Oswiu.[106] At the other end of the country, in Kent, Eadberht Praen emerged briefly from holy orders in order to become king (796).[107] But the best evidence comes from Mercia. Repton in Derbyshire was the burial-place of Mercian kings, was ruled by a Mercian princess, and in the early eighth century was the first choice of retreat for the princely Mercian would-be hermit, Guthlac, to whom we shall return. It has left us with one of the most notable early Anglo-Saxon churches.[108] Peterborough in Northamptonshire was clearly connected with the royal court: King Offa 'signed' a charter there in 765, and the abbot of Peterborough several times appears as a witness in grants issued elsewhere during the second half of the eighth century.[109] Both Offa (757–96) and his scarcely less formidable successor, Cenwulf (796–821) secured papal endorsement for their royal *Eigenkirchen*. At Winchcombe in Gloucestershire, Offa founded a convent (787) to which Cenwulf added a *minster*. We know that the Mercian royal family archives were kept there, and it was there that Cenwulf's son, Kenelm, was buried and rapidly developed a highly spurious cult.[110] In short, there was a close connection between the Mercian dynasty, whose ancestors appear in *Beowulf*, and which, incidentally, produced successive kings named Beornwulf and Wiglaf in the early ninth century, and many of the most important religious foundations of the time.[111] The association had some controversial results, and led to a major crisis in relations between the archbishop of Canterbury and the Mercian kings (816–25), but it is only to be expected that what was already characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon nobility should be practised on a regal scale by kings.[112]

To turn from the corrupt minsters of Bede's letter to its proud bishops is to encounter immediately the towering figure of St Wilfrid, who was bishop of various parts of Northumbria at various times between 665 and 709.[113] It is certainly not difficult to find echoes of *Beowulf* in his outwardly worldly career: the three days of feasting with the king to celebrate the dedication of his church at Ripon; the heroic struggle on a Sussex beach where his 120 men (no mean escort) were pitted against

Gideon-like odds, and where they swore to find, 'either death with praise or life with triumph'; the famous deathbed scene where Wilfrid distributed one portion of his extensive treasure to the abbots of Hexham and Ripon, 'so that they might be able to buy the friendship of kings and bishops', and another to 'those who have laboured and suffered long exile with me, and to whom I have given no lands and estates'. It is not surprising, somehow, to find Bede referring scornfully to drunkenness in Wilfrid's household, or that the West Saxon scholar, Aldhelm, in a remarkable letter, should have compared the obligations of Wilfrid's priestly following with those of a secular retinue.[114] As in Frankish Gaul, such secularity is best understood not as backsliding, but as a natural function of the place of bishops in society. Some bishops, like Ecgberht himself, were the brothers and uncles of kings; bishops went to war in England, as in Gaul, and are found in the casualty lists of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. In the laws of Æthelberht of Kent, from the very earliest years of Anglo-Saxon Christianity, a bishop's property was more generously assessed for compensation than a king's.[115] Bishops like this could no more be expected not to cut a splendid figure for Christ than can their modern counterparts be expected to avoid television. Wilfrid himself was actually far from worldly in his personal life; a tireless missionary as well as a builder, a patron of the poor as of St Peter (each of whom also received a share of his treasure), he was the greatest, all things considered, of the early Anglo-Saxon saints. He channelled the values of the aristocracy from which he came into the service of God, and God's servants had cause to be grateful. Even lesser figures like Archbishop Eanbald of York, berated by Alcuin for his extravagant following, may at least be understood, so long as we remember the prestige which, in a barbarian society, a bishop automatically possessed.

To concentrate simply upon what Christianity lost by its adoption into the aristocratic world of the barbarian West is also to ignore some real gains. The most obvious of these is Anglo-Saxon religious poetry. The *Dream of the Rood* is now seen as much more than just a reflection of the *comitatus* ethic, but it is nonetheless from that ethic that the poem draws so much of its great power.[116] *Andreas* is a much less distinguished product of the same tradition, but it seems to have been influenced by the vocabulary, and even the theme, of *Beowulf* itself.[117] The point that needs emphasis is that this is more than just a literary continuity; the miracle of Cædmon and the opinions of Bede notwithstanding, the idiom of early English Christian poetry is aristocratic, and testifies to the social ambience of Anglo-Saxon Christianity, as much as it does to the range of its literary and patristic learning. The usual poetic term for God, *Dryhten*, is still used in *Beowulf* and in the early Kentish laws for a secular lord, and originated in a word for the military leader of a *comitatus*.[118]

An equal if less obvious gain is the famous style of manuscript illumination which is to be found in the Lindisfarne Gospels. Traditionally, the origins of the style were ascribed to external influences. But brilliant studies by Dr Bruce-Mitford have now demonstrated that the artist, Abbot Eadfrith (*c*.698), was indebted not only for his

artistic motifs but also for his very techniques to the elaborate skills and rich repertoire of Celtic and Germanic metal-workers.[119] Again, there is a link with *Beowulf*, which is itself such powerful evidence of the aristocratic taste for sophisticated treasures. St Boniface himself made the point clear when he wrote home for 'the letters of St Peter, my lord, written in letters of gold, in order to secure honour and reverence for the Holy Scriptures when they are preached before the eyes of the carnal'.[120] What had once distinguished a proud and wealthy warrior was now to glorify Christ.

I would like to make the same sort of point about aspects of Anglo-Saxon hagiography. Professor Whitelock and Dr Mayr-Harting have both noticed the suggestive parallels between *Beowulf* and the eighth-century Life of the Mercian royal saint, Guthlac (d. 716), by Felix of Crowland.[121] What the overlap seems to amount to is that Guthlac's heroic sanctity is being articulated in terms that would have been familiar to an audience of *Beowulf*. Felix follows his Mediterranean model, Athanasius' Life of Anthony (251–356), fairly closely, but there are significant shifts of emphasis. The monstrous is more to the fore. Guthlac's choice of hermitage, on the spot that would later become Crowland abbey, was actually dictated by the terrors that he could anticipate there; Anthony's torments were merely the consequences of the saint's choice. Both saints occupy tombs, but Guthlac's is reminiscent of that which Beowulf's dragon inhabited, and it is situated, like Grendel's abode, in a marshy wilderness. Both saints are haunted by creatures of a relatively 'normal' type (though there is no croaking raven in Athanasius); but what had been a preliminary, if painful, whipping in Athanasius, becomes, in Felix, an additional raid by an outlandish menagerie, whose physical characteristics permit Felix to show off his Hesperic vocabulary in all its glory. Anthony had promised that demons could take the form not only of reptiles and giants, but also of troops of soldiers; for Guthlac, a chieftain who had been in exile among the Welsh in his warlike youth, it was appropriate that the demons who tossed him on ghostly spears should have British accents.[122] Rather like the Irish St Brendan, therefore, Guthlac is a saintly hero in something of a traditional secular mould. There is a further point here. St Guthlac, like St Wilfrid, belongs to a class of saint that is now known to German scholars as '*Adelsheilige*, aristocratic saint'. We are told about his distinguished family ancestry, and about his lively career in the world before conversion. He is three times brought into contact with his cousin, Æthelbald, the future king of the Mercians and 'Bretwalda' (716–57) [though see chapter 3, Additional Note pp. 131–4.] These are particular characteristics of a new hagiographical fashion in the seventh century, and one which also emphasized, as in Wilfrid's case if not in Guthlac's, the public splendour of the saint.[123] The fashion seems to arise, not from following any particular model, Mediterranean or Frankish, but simply from writing hagiography in a barbarian environment. This is literature to the taste of a Germanic aristocracy, and thus reflecting the social origins not only of Guthlac himself, but also of the communities for whom his deeds were recorded.

One final aspect of early English Christian culture is neither a 'gain' nor a 'loss', but is worth considering in this context. Most of the Anglo-Saxon royal genealogies trace the various English dynasties back to Woden, whom there is some justification for regarding as the god of the war band. Stenton wrote of 'the aristocratic convention which regarded Woden as the ancestor of the most English kings'.[124] The genealogies also contain other memorable names of even greater significance for our purposes: Sceaf, Scyld, Beaw, Heremod, Eormanric, Offa of Angle, Finn and Hwala; the first seven appear in *Beowulf* (some prominently), and the last four appear in *Widsith*. As Kenneth Sisam demonstrated, these lists of names are largely fraudulent as real family history, but social anthropologists have taught us that, even when far from reliable as historical fact, genealogies nevertheless express what societies choose to believe, even need to believe, about their past. Seen in this light, the Anglo-Saxon genealogies represent early English society's willingness, and indeed determination, to reach back into the pagan past in order to lend added distinction to the ancestry of its kings. It then becomes especially important that Sisam also demonstrated that most of the genealogies that we have must have been literate products, put together as a body at the end of the eighth century. Their 'educated' character is further underlined by the appearance of Caesar in the East Anglian genealogy, and of the patriarchs from Noah back to Adam in the West Saxon.[125] What the Anglo-Saxon royal genealogies thus suggest is that the need for a heroic past was still felt, even in educated, and thus presumably clerical, circles, 150 years after the conversion. Just as the poetic techniques of heroic verse survived, so too did the memory of the heroes themselves, and in a context such as to argue their continuing importance. In fact, Alcuin himself, in a remarkable letter to the men of Kent, highlighted the surviving relevance of heroic progenitors: he laments the decline of the ancient English dynasties, urges the Kentings to pick a noble leader, and comments: 'The more obscure the origin [of kings] the more they lack valour.'[126]

This survey of the character of the early English Church and its culture leads to two conclusions. In the first place, most, if not all, of the features that I have described are perfectly well-known, but they are not usually placed side by side. To me, they all seem to be interrelated. Of course, I do not suggest that Guthlac would have approved of every noble monk, or that Wilfrid could have endorsed all worldly bishops. What I do suggest is that they are all aspects of the same essential truth: the aristocratic environment of early English Christianity. I am not sure that a civilization could have spawned so much that we admire without also giving rise to what we have usually followed Bede in regarding as degenerate. I am sure that very little of the spectacular cultural achievement of the so-called Northumbrian Renaissance would have been possible without the enormous wealth which kings and noblemen brought with them into the Church. If, then, historians are to continue to dismiss developments in the English Church in the eighth century as evidence of decline, they ought perhaps to reflect upon what they are throwing out with the

bathwater. But in any case talk of decline misses the point, and ignores elementary facts of early medieval life. When the aristocracies of the barbarian West became Christian, they did not, and they could not, lose their awareness of being aristocracies, and this is as true of churchmen as of laymen. If we start from this point, the abuses denounced by the Church Fathers may legitimately be seen as evidence, not of Christianity's failure but of one of its greatest triumphs: it had been successfully assimilated by a warrior nobility, which had no intention of abandoning its culture or seriously changing its way of life, but which was willing to throw its traditions, customs, tastes and loyalties into the articulation of the new faith, and whose persisting 'secularity' was an important condition of the richness of early English Christian civilization. Quite simply, the Anglo-Saxon Church became part of the Establishment.

Second, though my argument in this paper has taken us a long way from the familiar pastures of *Beowulf* criticism, it does seem to have yielded something like what we were looking for: a social and cultural context for the composition of heroic literature. It is clear from what the conciliar canons say about secular dress and armed clergy, for example, and it is clear, too, from what we can find out about the history of the early Anglo-Saxon *minster* and about English bishops of the period that the crucial line between clerical and lay, the conventional distinction between ascetic and secular standards, had become blurred at a number of points, and especially, it may be noted, in the area around the king.[127] It is also clear that the Anglo-Saxon Church took over many of the tastes and interests of the secular world, whether for new purposes, as in illumination, hagiography or Christian poetry, or for old, as in genealogies. I can perhaps best put the conclusion in the form of a question. Does the composition by a literate poet, who was probably therefore a cleric, of a great secular poem about the pagan kings of the past still seem anomalous in a society where monasteries function partly as the royal court and partly as royal family property, where bishops go to war, where Gospel books have begun to look like secular treasures, and where the adventures of saints resemble so closely those of heroes? Is *Beowulf* an unthinkable product for a monastic scriptorium, when not only Alcuin, but also councils of the Church talk of drunkenness, banquets and the patronage of harpists in clerical environments; when the Mercian royal house, with whom many *Beowulf* critics have very reasonably felt that the poem may have a connection, was treating its religious foundations as a part of its *hereditas*? I began this paper by accepting the view that *Beowulf* was *par excellence* literature of the aristocracy, and by suggesting that its primary value to the historian was that it opened a window onto the otherwise closed and unknown thought-world of the Anglo-Saxon warrior classes. We have now seen other evidence that the early English Church was, in a sense, dominated by aristocratic values itself. I conclude that *Beowulf* is a very intelligible product of such a culture, and that the poem does indeed constitute vital evidence for what was involved in the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy.

V Bede

The argument adopted in this paper leaves me with a final problem. The quest for 'alternative perspectives' on the Age of Bede is perhaps characteristic of modern studies. But if one is to argue that *Beowulf* is in some ways a better symbol of what was involved in the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy than Bede, one needs a stronger justification than intellectual fashion. It is necessary to show not only that *Beowulf* may well have been representative, at least in part, but also that Bede is himself, in some respects, an anomaly. And if Bede is to be regarded as an anomaly, he is, like *Beowulf*, an anomaly that requires explanation.

Thanks to the modern tendency to see Bede against the background of European historiography in the early Middle Ages, it is in fact possible to suggest that he is a rather isolated figure, and, once again, the argument of this paper can be clarified by giving it a European dimension. Gregory of Tours, the sixth-century historian of the Franks, was certainly known to Bede, and he wrote what is, all in all, a very different book from the *Ecclesiastical History*. Most of Gregory's ten books were devoted to the period of his own active life as bishop of Tours (573–94), and no small part of them was taken up with vigorous denunciation. As has been observed, this is in marked contrast to Bede's five books, of which only one covers the forty-five years of his own mature life, while the previous ninety are spread over four, and in which Bede veils his dissatisfaction by discreet hints and silences.[128] Another who might be compared with Bede, though writing after his day, is the historian of the Lombards, Paul the Deacon (fl. 774–99). Not only does Paul tell some rousing stories of the secular life (usually without censure); he also says very little at all about his people's religious history, whereas he does say a lot about their pre-Christian past. He even records one story in which the Lombards gained both their name of 'Long-beards' and victory over the hated Vandals under the auspices of Woden, and although he calls the story ridiculous he does report it.[129] Bede, of course, is almost totally silent on the pre-Christian achievements of the Anglo-Saxons, and conversion is the dominant motif of the whole *History*. Finally, another later historian much more like Paul than Bede was Widukind, the historian of the continental Saxons (*c*.968). We hear so much in his early chapters about his people's heathen history that Professor Karl Hauck has recently been able to reconstruct the pagan iconography of the Wesermund bracteates on the basis of Widukind's account; but the conversion of the Saxons, perhaps too painfully associated with memories of Frankish conquest, is passed over in a short chapter.[130]

I cite these continental parallels, partly to show that Bede might have written quite another sort of book, without even abandoning the genre of early medieval historiography, but also because I have the impression that, if he had, the emergence of *Beowulf* would have been easier to understand. The two important points are these: first, the continental historians give a clear impression of a Christianity that

was recognizably barbarian, and do not encourage illusions about the nature of contemporary society. It was the startling difference in tone between the English historian and his continental counterparts that encouraged R. W. Chambers to contrast the 'barbarous' and 'sordid' Franks and Lombards, 'quarrelling over the loot of the Roman Empire, until they lost whatever barbaric virtues they had formerly possessed when they lived in the more austere surroundings of their native forests and swamps', with the early English who had not yet been brought into contaminating contact with the degenerate world of decaying Rome.[131] Second, Paul and Widukind, even Gregory, permit no reader to form the impression that their peoples had forgotten their ancestors.[132] On both counts, it looks as though conversion on the Continent had made comparatively little difference, at least initially. This is scarcely the view that one is encouraged to take by Bede. Apart from the famous passage on the tribal origins of the Angles, Saxons and Jutes, a few shards of Kentish tradition, and a snippet of Northumbrian tribal pride concerning the deeds of King Æthelfrith, conversion for Bede is where the story of the Anglo-Saxons begins and thereafter it is a story of saints, not sinners.[133] We thus miss, in the *Ecclesiastical History* at least, any extent to which the Anglo-Saxons remained tied, by custom or memory, to their past, and with it we miss the context that I have suggested for *Beowulf*. So why is Bede so different from continental members of the tradition in which he wrote?

We must recognize, first, that he was a fundamentalist. Bede has inspired the affection of his readers as few other historians have, but there is something in him of the intellectual wolf in sheep's clothing. He was capable of a degree of scholarly ruthlessness which it is not easy to parallel even in his acknowledged disciple, Alcuin. In this context, it is obviously relevant to remind oneself of Bede's attitude to the two principles which probably explain Alcuin's hostility to songs about Ingeld. Those from whom Bede learned most, Jerome, Augustine and Gregory the Great, never shook off their debt to the Latin grammarian's skills, and thus sought to find a use for the literary legacy of antiquity. Bede, however, produced a grammar, in which nearly all illustrations of stylistic points come from the Bible, and in which none come from secular literature; it has been seriously doubted whether he had even read Vergil.[134] So far as one can see from his commentaries, moreover, Bede accepted the full implications of the orthodox view that the unbaptized would probably not be saved. Where Augustine, therefore, had publicly debunked the noble pagans of Rome, Bede turned upon the heroes of the English pre-Christian past his unrivalled capacity for withering silence.[135] Bede undoubtedly possessed the great teacher's gift of flexibility, and in this respect his reputation for gentleness is abundantly justified. But he also had the teacher's sense of the irrelevant. The two main keynotes of the prefaces to his commentaries are the desire to teach his 'lazy' fellow-countrymen the lessons that he considered urgently necessary, and the determination to stick closely to the *vestigia patrum*. When Bede came to write his *Ecclesiastical History*, we may guess from the tone of the last chapter, and we know

from the *Letter to Egbert*, that he had not lost his sense of urgency as he grew old, and his commitment to the salvation of the Anglo-Saxons was as strong as it had been when he wrote about the Bible.[136] In these circumstances, a thinker as loyal to the principles of Latin Christianity as Bede was unlikely to waste time on telling cheerful stories about the pagan past. There are thus no sagas in Bede, as there are in Paul the Deacon and in Widukind, and this is a vital reason why modern historians do not usually recognize the world of saga in Bede's Britain.

There are others. Bede's is, first and foremost, an ecclesiastical history, and, as the example of his grammatical work shows, Bede was outstanding for his capacity to remain faithful to the rules of a genre. Where Paul and Widukind were later exposed to the influence of the 'secular' tradition, as mediated above all by classical historiography, Bede is closer to the model established by Eusebius in the early fourth century than any such writer since Eusebius himself; and this certainly helps to explain his overwhelming preoccupation with the process of conversion and the affairs of the Church.[137] Yet, even by these standards, Bede's work has peculiarities, and chief among these is his reluctance to express criticism. If Bede had followed Gregory of Tours or the mid-sixth-century Welsh prophet, Gildas (whose work he knew well, and who was the only historian other than himself to whom he gave the label *historicus*), into expressing in public the criticisms that we know him to have voiced in private, we should almost certainly have formed a very different impression of the history of early English Christianity. But Bede believed that it was wrong to criticize priests (he will mention that a bishop bought his see without a word of censure); instead, his method was to highlight the good example, by way of implied contrast, and in a famous passage, he compares the labours of Aidan and his disciples with the *segnitia temporis nostri*. For all that he wrote in his preface that men learn both by good and by bad example, we hear much more about the former than the latter.[138]

Here too it seems possible that we might find an explanation in Bede's patristic background. The tradition of teaching to which Bede belonged was above all that of Gregory the Great, as laid down in his *Dialogues* and his *Pastoral Care*. One of the main principles of this tradition was that much could be done, especially for the simpler kind of audience, by the force of personal example, or by describing the lives of holy men; it was a specifically monastic inheritance. 'The Lives of Saints are often more effective than mere instruction for inspiring us to love heaven as our home,' wrote Gregory in the preface to his *Dialogues*. In the *Pastoral Care* he taught that a preacher who actually practises what he preaches will make a much bigger impression than one who merely harangues his congregations; and, on the other hand, no amount of eloquence will undo the bad effects of the failure to set a good example. 'There are those who investigate spiritual precepts with cunning care, but what they penetrate in their understanding, they trample upon in their lives … Whence it happens that, when the shepherd walks through steep places, the flock follows to the precipice.'[139] Bede could thus learn from his principal mentor that what a relatively unsophisticated audience needed was the example of lives led by holy

men; what they did *not* need was familiarity with bad men, or even with those good men whose careers had dubious features – for that would be to lead the sheep to the precipice.

I suggest that this is the reason for the otherwise rather surprising balance of the *Ecclesiastical History*, which Professor Campbell has well described as a 'gallery of good examples'.[140] Bede was trying to encourage imitation and that was a basic reason why he wrote, but he was afraid that his flock might follow the wrong shepherd. Wilfrid could be praised for his many achievements, but to describe his career in full might run the risk of setting up a flawed model, and it was better to concentrate on the virtues and miracles of those with a more pristine public image, such as Aidan or Cuthbert. Bede, therefore, differed from Gildas not only in accuracy or good sense, but also in his strong sense that history is properly about holy men; and where Gregory of Tours had written copiously about the sins of the present, Bede wrote for preference about the glories of the past. English history, unlike Frankish, began not with another 'melancholy catalogue of the vices and follies of mankind', but with a vision of a new apostolic age. Among the consequences of this gratifying fact is the one that has most concerned me in this paper: we have been half-blind to the real character of the context from which *Beowulf* probably emerged, and students of the poem have been misled in two opposite directions, concluding either, with Chadwick, that the earliest English epic is largely heathen, despite its strident monotheism, or, with Chambers, that it is unimpeachably Christian, despite its unconcealed secularity.

If there is much in patristic traditions that will explain the quality of 'otherworldliness' in Bede's most famous book, it might also be possible to offer a final explanation along rather different lines. We are nowadays taught to see historians against their social and cultural background, and, in view of the central arguments of this paper, it is perhaps significant that, socially speaking, Bede was without a background. The only thing he ever says about his kindred is that they surrendered him at the age of seven to Benedict Biscop, and thenceforward, as he says in his fine homily on its founder, his kindred was the spiritual family to which he belonged. Bede could have been a nobleman himself, but, if so, he had managed to forget it. There is, perhaps, a suggestive contrast here both with some of the other leading figures of early Anglo-Saxon Christianity and with the continental historians whom I have mentioned. Wilfrid, for instance, was already thirteen when he went to Lindisfarne, and had spent several years waiting on the guests in his father's aristocratic household. Guthlac spent the nine years before his admission to Repton at the age of twenty-four in a characteristically aristocratic career of rapine. Of Cuthbert's career we know little, but we do know that he had served in an army.[141] I would be inclined to see a connection between these environments and what we have seen of Christian culture at Wilfrid's Hexham, Guthlac's Crowland and Cuthbert's Lindisfarne. Similarly, there is no doubting the aristocratic background of Paul the Deacon, and although Widukind's biography is as obscure as Bede's, he

never made any secret of his sympathy for the Saxon nobility and bore a name that was illustrious in Saxon tradition. Gregory of Tours was a Roman nobleman and not a barbarian, so that rather different considerations apply; nevertheless, his membership of a family of many bishops to some extent committed him to a particular tradition of public service, even if it was not necessarily responsible for the interest in the Frankish past which he undoubtedly possessed.[142] By contrast, Bede's personal history cut him off from contemporary aristocratic society and its values, and buried him, from boyhood, in a world of books.

Bede, of course, was not the only oblate of the period, but there is the further consideration that, as I have tried to argue elsewhere (above, chapter 1), Monkwearmouth-Jarrow probably was rather an extraordinary place to be growing up in the later seventh century. To revert to the 'norms' that we considered earlier: the lives of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow's abbots share relatively few features of the *Adelsheiliger* tradition; they say nothing much about family backgrounds, and they are politically 'neutral', showing neither a hostile nor a particularly sympathetic attitude towards kings.[143] Again, where Wilfrid became a great bishop, and passed his monastic foundations on to his own kinsmen, like so many others in Britain and abroad, Biscop never became a bishop at all, and spent much of his last hours adjuring his monks that on no account was he to be succeeded by a relative; his successor inherited this anxiety.[144] And whereas the Hiberno-Saxon style of illumination is now recognized to be unthinkable without its background in traditional insular metal-work, the greatest of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow's manuscripts, the *Codex Amiatinus*, which was almost precisely contemporary with the Lindisfarne Gospels, and which was being written while Bede was growing up in the community, seems to strain every nerve in order to escape from its contemporary environment. Its handwriting is a variant of Italian uncial, its text and decoration are distinct, as in the Late Antique tradition, and its art, while betraying indications of insular technique, strives to reproduce the unfamiliar effects of a Mediterranean original: it is a book with its horizons beyond the Alps and not in barbarian Northumbria.[145] I am not concerned here with how and why Biscop came to set up on Northumbrian soil an island of Mediterranean culture that was lapped, but not at first flooded, by the values of the northern world outside its harbours. What is important is the way that his community seems to anticipate and explain the views of its greatest son. The angry author of the *Letter to Ecgberht* is easily recognizable in the pupil of a founder with such strong views on the succession of abbots. Bede's failure, compared to Eddius, to reflect the 'thought-world' of the barbarian nobility is intelligible in a member of a community where the court is not known to have feasted for days and nights on end, and where Ceolfrith fought to discipline restless aristocrats.[146] A bible which was for many centuries thought to be an Italian book may help to explain how it was that Bede began with twenty-two chapters on Roman Britain, then utterly ignored the history of his own people in the sixth century before bringing St Augustine to Kent in the footsteps of Julius Caesar.

Biscop's library, which Professor Laistner did so much to illuminate, was the making of Bede's learning. I would further suggest that though himself a nobleman, Biscop's 'ultramontanism' helped to isolate Bede from the aristocratic culture of contemporary Christianity in England, where I have tried to show that the past was remembered in legend as in custom and taste.

Anomaly is much too strong a term for Bede, but it is not, after all, entirely unreasonable to see him as standing apart from the world he wrote about. The Bible was naturally regarded as the most important of all histories in the Middle Ages, and the Old Testament especially offered all early medieval historians the image of a recorder of events who was also their critic in God's name. Alienation is thus, to some extent, a built-in condition of historical writing throughout the period, and its potential is already revealed by the fact that a 'zone of silence' between the specifically ecclesiastical and the pagan or merely secular traditions existed as early as the fourth century. Even so, Bede was the first major historian to write as a monk, and, in view of the circumstances of his life, it is not surprising that no other historical masterpiece of the Middle Ages so nearly justifies the description 'other-worldly'.[147] Again, few early medieval historians were only historians; most had performed in other genres, and regularly imported features of their alternative style into their historical writings. But Bede was the only important barbarian historian who was also a Father of the Church in his own right, and, even by patristic standards, his commitment to the spreading of the Gospel was unusually strong (he never had to face the live problems of running a diocese). Bede's whole training made him a commentator upon rather than a recorder of events, and his is thus understandably one of the most morally didactic histories of the whole medieval period, if also one of the most gracefully expressed.[148] If Bede is viewed in this sort of perspective, the differences between his *Ecclesiastical History* and its continental counterparts fall into place, and the gulf which separates it from the major vernacular monument of early English literature may be understood.

VI   Conclusions

The conclusions to which the arguments of this paper point can best be grouped under the three main heads of the topics in its title. First, as regards *Beowulf*: historicism can debilitate the study of literature when it seeks to dictate to critics in the name of historical reality, and I am not here concerned to limit the range of subjective reaction which is the critic's legitimate, indeed necessary, business. Nevertheless, nearly all literary criticism depends in part upon historical assumptions, and it cannot be wrong for historians to test the strength of these foundations. The historical examination of early medieval Christian culture is a better method, in my view, of deciding between alternative interpretations of *Beowulf* than analogy with the plays of Shakespeare.

I would suggest, therefore, that the right approach to the problem of the Christianity of *Beowulf* is indicated by two types of historical evidence. In the first place, Alcuin's letter to Hygebald probably does hold an important clue, in that it teaches us to look not to the *principles* but to the social and cultural milieu of early English Christianity, if we are to understand the literate composition of heroic literature among the Anglo-Saxons. Given their context in early medieval canon law and theology, Alcuin's remarks argue that Chadwick was probably right to feel that a clerical pen had no business with such material as *Beowulf*, wherever it was plied. On the other hand, both Alcuin and the conciliar canons indicate that traditional literary tastes did survive in ecclesiastical, even monastic, circles and the context in this instance indicates that this was because of the domination of the Church by the values of the barbarian aristocracy. There is an analogy here with the older and larger debate about Christianity and the classics. Few would nowadays make the mistake of divorcing the Church Fathers altogether from the literary legacy of antiquity, but the fact is that their published attitude towards it was seldom sympathetic and often hostile. If we are to understand the survival of the classical tradition, we need to appreciate the extent to which, in a Christian culture that was more or less created in Latin, traditional literature remained indispensable equipment for an educated man. Similarly, although the 'party line' of the western Fathers was, if anything, even less sympathetic to secular literature in the vernacular, the heroic style did survive, essentially because the early medieval Church was an *Adelskirche*. This sort of solution by no means excludes the possibility of Irish influence upon the genesis of *Beowulf*. The celebration of their ancestors, real or mythical, must have come naturally to barbarian noblemen, even after their conversion, but the more optimistic Irish attitude to the fate of the unbaptized could have contributed to it by removing a potential source of discouragement. Indeed, the Irish sense of the continuing importance of the pre-Christian past may have been one crucial reason for their massive success as missionaries with Germanic aristocracies.[149]

Second, the same sort of point is made by the evidence of manuscript survival. On the one hand, very little such literature as *Beowulf*, *Waldhere* and *Finnsburh* has survived from early medieval Europe. Those to whom *Beowulf* has seemed an unexceptional product of Christian orthodoxy need to say *why* only a single copy has survived, in an unpromising manuscript context, and why analogous material is so hard to find. On the other hand, some fragments of Germanic tradition did find their way onto parchment in an age of 'restricted literacy', and this must be explained by those to whom *Beowulf* has seemed to have nothing to do with Christianity. The suggestion in this paper is that, given the society and culture of the early medieval Church, the survival of a secular tradition is not at all surprising, and it is unnecessary to challenge the many indications that early Anglo-Saxon literacy was effectively a clerical monopoly in order to account for it. But, given also that orthodox opinion should have been unfavourable to the

cultivation of this sort of literature, it is not surprising that *Beowulf* barely survived the English 'Carolingian Renaissance' of the mid-tenth century, just as the *Hilde-brandslied* barely survived the Frankish; and critics should not be ashamed of their modern conviction that the poem is a masterpiece merely because of its precarious preservation.

The question 'is *Beowulf* Christian?' engages too many of the personal convictions of critics ever to evoke agreement upon a wide scale. The ambivalences of the poem are too obvious, and its moral quality too much at variance with what is today understood to be Christianity. But if Alcuin would probably not have thought the English epic Christian, a corollary of my argument is that modern critics have the option of disagreeing, if they wish. The Christian Church in the sixth to ninth centuries directly challenged the old pagan gods, and officially discouraged nostalgia, but it presented less of a threat to the heroic ethos than modern Christians might expect. Much of what barbarians had always chosen to believe and practise could be confirmed out of the Old Testament if not the New, the Apocrypha if not the Old Testament.[150] Poets, moreover, usually write not about what they merely know, but about what captivates their imagination, and the *Beowulf* poet was not the only barbarian Christian to be especially interested in a limited, if also quite recherché, portion of Judaeo-Christian revelation. Two of the earliest pieces of Old High German verse, the *Wessobrunner Gebet* and the *Muspilli*, concern respectively the Creation and the Judgement. St Columba, in his *Altus Prosator*, expressed a lively interest in the monsters of Scripture, both giants and dragons, and though he does mention the Trinity, he was scarcely more interested than the *Beowulf* poet in Christ as Man and Redeemer. It has recently been suggested that *Beowulf* reads like the work of an Arian, and although there are almost insuperable objections to the theory of Arian influence, the suggestion does remind us that a sizeable proportion of the early Germanic peoples long remained faithful to a doctrinal system in which the role of God the Son was played down by comparison with that of God the Father.[151] In these circumstances, it is probably a misuse of terminology to call the virtues of the heroes of Germanic literature pagan; and it seems a pity to take as evidence of superficial Christianity, or of lack of interest in the faith, what actually tells us something more interesting and more moving: the sort of impact that *Christian* revelation made in its new cultural environment. In *Beowulf*, the poet's concern was probably not with the inculcation of Christian principles, but we shall massively increase the bulk of 'pagan' English literature if all that we are prepared to call Christian is *Paradise Lost* or *Pilgrim's Progress*.

From *Beowulf* I turn to the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy. European historians of religious change are heirs to a particular tradition of ecclesiastical historiography, which is essentially that of the New Testament, and because Bede's is the greatest of all ecclesiastical histories, English historians have been particularly exposed to it; but the inheritance includes certain critical reflexes which are handicaps to historical understanding of the process. Above all, we have far too concrete a

conception of the process of conversion. Dominated by the awe-inspiring assertion that a man may, and indeed must, be born again, historians of conversion think instinctively of the wholesale exchange of one set of values for another; there is an underlying assumption that the set of values abandoned for the faith were as comprehensive and coherent as is Christianity itself, and these values are given the generic label of 'paganism'. As a result, we describe as survivals of 'paganism' what may not have very much to do with heathen cult at all, and what are often only indications that society had failed to remake itself completely. Historians have, of course, always been aware that all is usually not renewed in the font, but they make the mistake of attributing too much of a religious significance to what survives of the Old Adam. The language of poetry and the process of blood-feud are two aspects of post-conversion life in Britain which have been adduced as evidence of lingering 'paganism', and the criticism of *Beowulf* has suffered on both counts.

But it is the heroic literature of the Anglo-Saxons that actually enables us to make the necessary distinctions, and this is perhaps the most important implication of the study of *Beowulf* for the historian of the conversion of the early English nobility. Seen in the wider context of vernacular culture in the early medieval West, *Beowulf* is really impressive evidence for the totality of the Anglo-Saxons conversion. Vast reserves of intellectual energy have been devoted to threshing the poem for grains of authentic pagan belief, but it must be admitted that the harvest has been meagre. The poet may have known that his heroes were pagans, but he did not know much about paganism. Aspects of his vocabulary have numinous associations which owe little to the Mediterranean, but there is a striking contrast between this situation and that revealed by the equivalent literatures of the Irish and Old Norse. Pagan deities do not often figure as *dramatis personae* in the Irish sagas, but scholars have never had much difficulty in detecting the ample evidence of the old Celtic religion beneath their surface.[152] Even the evidence of the Irish sagas, however, pales into insignificance beside that of the Norse, where we find exactly what we do not find in *Beowulf*, namely the gods of the Germanic Pantheon on active service. We have been told that Anglo-Saxon poetry is 'steeped' in pre-Christian religion, but it is important not to confuse idiom with content or ethics with faith.[153] On the contrary, the unqualified monotheism of *Beowulf* and *Waldhere* is of a piece with the Anglo-Saxon evidence as a whole. We know remarkably little about early English heathenism, and although the evidence of conciliar canons, archaeology and even place-names suggests that ancient superstitions lingered in the countryside, the literature is among other indications that, by the eighth century at least, the Anglo-Saxon nobility was suffering from what amounts, by Celtic or Scandinavian standards, to collective religious amnesia.[154] Instead of trying to eke out what scraps of evidence we have with the aid of Scandinavian analogies, historians would do better, I suggest, to ask *why* the material is so sparse. Why, for instance, is there no English syncretistic tradition? Why are the Anglian stone crosses of the pre-Viking age so unlike the Gosforth cross, with its remarkable blend of Norse creation and Christian crucifixion?

But the disappearance of pagan Germanic gods is not at all the same thing as the disappearance of pagan Germanic heroes, or of the heroic way of life with which they were associated; and though the distinction is blurred by Bede, it is established by *Beowulf*. The baffling discrepancy in the poem between pagan practice and Christian sentiment is decisive evidence that, although the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy was willing to accept a new God, it was *not* prepared to jettison the memory or the example of those who had worshipped the old. Aristocracies in these circumstances very rarely are. As anthropological study of societies not dissimilar from the Anglo-Saxons has shown, memories of the past and cultural values are often inseparable. Literature like *Beowulf* was important to Anglo-Saxon noblemen not because these Scandinavian tales described any part of their real past (so far as we know) but because they encapsulated, and indeed identified, the social and cultural values of the class. We shall fail to understand the persistence of the 'heroic code' unless we can appreciate its real social relevance to a society where courage, loyalty and generosity were fundamental conditions of a nobleman's way of life.[155] Heroic stories were more than just entertainment. To abandon them would have jeopardized the social consciousness of a whole warrior class.

Like the disappearance of heathenism, the surviving importance of a heroic past is also indicated by other types of evidence. The Anglo-Saxon genealogies, as we have seen, invoke heroes from the continental tradition, as well as Woden (in a 'euphemerized' form) in an effort to boost the prestige of kingship.[156] To judge by the manuscript evidence, the West Saxons, like some continental peoples, associated the deeds of their forebears with their ancestral laws.[157] As has always been recognized, the warrior ethic of the late tenth-century *Battle of Maldon* is still that of the heroic *comitatus*, and even though its heroes are 'national' not cosmopolitan figures, we are still some way short of the more obviously patriotic and crusading overtones of the *Song of Roland*.[158]

Now Tolkien saw, more clearly than any before him, that *Beowulf* is a poem about the past, and is most remarkable for the intensity of its feeling about the past. If we can grasp the strength of the social and cultural ties that bind any nobility to its past, we are a long way towards understanding the ambivalence, the mingled pride and sorrow with which the poet looks back upon his heroes. As a member of the warrior classes himself, the poet must have admired – perhaps he even imitated – the virtues in which his work glorifies. As a Christian, he knew, and perhaps he lamented, that heroic virtues are not enough. It is not surprising that the ethical quality of *Beowulf* should have seemed to so many to pull in two different directions at once. To me, the loftiness of tone which transcends the merely secular in the poem is a legacy neither of Christianity nor paganism; it springs from a fundamental tension within the poet's soul.

The long and short of it is that modern historians can afford to distinguish, even if Bede, Boniface and Alcuin could not, between the essentials of pagan belief and

the secular values of pre-Christian society. It is a basic error to confuse a continuity in depth between clerical and secular standards with a linear continuity between paganism and Christianity. The main lesson of the 'alternative perspective' furnished by vernacular literature for the student of Bede and his England is that, to some extent, we need to replace the constricted range of vision that is characteristic of ecclesiastical history by an imaginative model of the Anglo-Saxon conversion similar to that supplied by Paul the Deacon for the Lombards or Widukind for the Saxons. The coming of Christianity displaced the old gods and diverted traditional values into new pastures, but it did not change those values. The conversion of the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy was a fact, and a remarkable one, but it was not the sort of miracle that Bede seems to describe. Precisely, perhaps, because Christianity is a religion whose standards are those of another world, it has proved remarkably adaptable in this one, and there have been almost as many 'conversions of Christianity' as there have been societies in receipt of the faith. In Anglo-Saxon England, to adapt the dying words of the Emperor Julian, the Galilean did not win a bloodless victory; but has he ever?

Finally, I turn to Bede. It is a primary implication of this paper that Bede is a more isolated figure than he has usually been considered. For this I make no apology, since Bede is indeed extraordinary. Previous generations of historians were ready to welcome him into their own ranks, while making the necessary excuse that his belief in miracles was a legacy of his time; today we must recognize that he is distinguished from his fellow-writers in the early Middle Ages by more than just accuracy, and from us by more than pious superstition. Historians are now readier to admit that his is only one view of what happened in seventh-century Britain, and it is not necessarily the most revealing just because it was the opinion of the cleverest man of the age. Bede's monastic background and patristic commitment put him out of sympathy with much that had happened, and was happening, in the Church of his own day; the result is that we have taken some of the evidence that Christianity had been accepted by the early English as indications either that the message had *not* got through, or that there had been decline from originally high standards; and we have, for example, oversimplified the career of St Wilfrid by seeing it as a mere clash between principle and self-interest.[159] Bede's patristically justified refusal to take an interest in the pre-Christian past of his people has greatly confused the interpretation of the only Old English epic, which we might have understood better had it been Lombardic or Old Saxon. In fact, a general feature of the *Ecclesiastical History* is that it is rarely illuminating on the preoccupations of the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy; and this is one reason why Sir Frank Stenton's book is curiously light on the status and culture of the early English nobility (and has little to say of *Beowulf*), whereas Hector Munro Chadwick, whose ear was attuned to the rhythms and themes of vernacular poetry, possessed an insight into the political and cultural history of the early Germanic peoples that has never properly been followed up.

But this can only be part of the story. As I have said, the *Ecclesiastical History*, unlike *Beowulf*, was one of the great international best-sellers of the early Middle Ages, and in the end Bede came to dominate the historical imaginations of his fellow-countrymen. Such a success can hardly be left unexplained. The truth, I think, is that Bede *was* representative of his readers in one crucial respect. He crystallized the enthusiasm with which the Anglo-Saxons, like the other early Germanic peoples, threw themselves into the balance of the old Romano-Christian world. The dominant note of the continental Dark Ages, as W. P. Ker clearly recognized, was sounded not by the effort to preserve the past, but (ironically) by the determination of the barbarian peoples to identify with the works of Rome (whether Augustan or Petrine).[160] The commitment of the Anglo-Saxon educated classes to the values of the Mediterranean is just as evident in the evangelist portraits of the Lindisfarne Gospels as is the insular background in the carpet pages. After Bede, the most important early Anglo-Saxon scholar was Aldhelm, and his extant works are as uncompromisingly Latin as Bede's, however much, like Plummer, we might have preferred to possess his vernacular poems.[161] Such a commitment indeed explains the effective abandonment of heathenism that I have argued *Beowulf* demonstrates, and ensured that, in the long run, the likes of Alcuin largely had their way about the heroic past also. It is this commitment that is incarnated by Bede. The *Ecclesiastical History*, a vision of the early English Church transfigured by the New Dispensation, projected an image of a society which, however idealized, was not at all unlike the image of itself which that society wished to see. What is unique about Bede, therefore, is not his interest in the Mediterranean and all that it stood for, but the exclusive character of that interest. The very special relationship which subsequent historians of the Anglo-Saxons have developed with their prototype makes it necessary to dwell occasionally on what he does not reflect: the essentially barbarian context of early Christianity in Britain, where the past was not immediately forgotten; but of course a proper understanding of the Anglo-Saxon Church must take full account of Bede as well as *Beowulf*. Bede represents among the Anglo-Saxons what contemporary history has given the modern historian a good opportunity to appreciate, namely an under-developed society's capacity, and indeed determination, to believe in its metamor-phosis by 'civilization'. What I have tried to suggest in this paper is that for the Anglo-Saxons such a determination was not quite unqualified, and that in *Beowulf* we may recognize neither more nor less than the force of habit which, even in a context of shifting religious allegiances, binds a society to its past.

That this even needs to be said is paradoxically the ultimate measure of Bede's greatness as a historian. Even in conventional terms, his achievement is astonishing. But many historians have told the truth to the best of their ability, and several have succeeded as well as Bede in circumstances that can have been scarcely less trying. Very few historians have ultimately changed a society's whole conception of their past and taught them to see its relevance for the present in a new light, as Bede did. His is great history above all because it is great art.

APPENDIX   *Beowulf*: the Redating Reassessed

One could say of works on *Beowulf* what Isidore of Seville said of those of St Augustine: anyone who claimed to have read them all was a liar. Which at once raises another hazard of *Beowulf* studies. Twentieth-century work made it impossible to say anything about *Beowulf* without many good scholars dissenting heatedly. It will no doubt remain impossible throughout the twenty-first, and as many centuries beyond as the poem is intensively studied. Notwithstanding all of that, I want to try here to see if more consensus may be possible in one of the most controverted areas of *Beowulf* studies, its date. My own previous publication on the poem was a casualty of the 'Toronto revolution', more so than it perhaps deserved. For one thing, I did *not* date the poem to the 'Age of Bede', or even to the eighth century: as could be realized by anyone who read beyond my title and opening pages to my Appendix C, my dating range was 675–875, which puts me in line with a majority of papers in the Colin Chase volume, his own included. Second, my argument that *Beowulf* conveys in many ways a truer picture of Anglo-Saxon responses to conversion than Bede is applicable to any century of the early English period, because what I was saying was that idealists are not to be trusted to reflect the religious feelings of the run of unregenerate human society in *any* age. Had I known what lay ahead in the five years between my finishing my paper and its publication, I would have made that a lot clearer. What I would not have done, however, was go along with the lat*est* daters. For I must confess at once that, however eirenic my approach, it offers less balm to late-daters than to early ones.[1]

All students of *Beowulf*, late- and early-daters alike, must accept that they have not convinced the other party. Late-daters have acquired a fail-safe resort in the traditionalism of Anglo-Saxon poetic style and repertoire, so explaining away any apparent archaism. On the other hand, not even Professor Goffart quite convicts the poet of conclusive anachronism, and early-daters score palpable hits over the palaeographical implications of certain textual errors, the morphology of Scandinavian names, and what look like early metrical aspects (which is not even to mention Sutton Hoo).[2] This impasse is presumably what persuades Professor Stanley that there can be no historical indications either way, and Professor Earl that responses to the poem must start from a premiss that it is undatable.[3] A historian is naturally less sure of his redundancy, if less sanguine too than some historians (and critics) that the poem 'must' be early or 'comfortably fits' a late date. I accept more readily than in 1978 that, like much great poetry, *Beowulf* has a timelessness that is in counterpoint to its context; and literary critics may, nay should, shake off any chronological restraint we historians seek to impose. Nevertheless, for a historian it matters a very great deal whether a poem like this could still

be written in the post-Alfredian era, which is why it is time for this one to have another look at the issue.

The argument that follows makes a single assumption, and that one hardly controversial today: *Beowulf* is a work of genius. But it then follows from what I see as the second greatest work of *Beowulf* criticism, that the digressions in which the poem abounds serve a crucial purpose in giving it its extraordinary resonance; the genius who composed the poem would have wasted a lot of his and his audience's time could he not count on a degree of familiarity with the rest of the heroic cycle comparable to what we have ourselves achieved since the nineteenth century.[4] *Beowulf* presupposes knowledge of many other stories than its own. Historians may ask when there is evidence of the circulation of such stories, and (more hesitantly) when there is none.

This brings me initially to the late-daters' argument that the burden of proof rests on those dating the poem much before its extant copy. It is of course a lousy argument in itself; the world's literature overflows with works centuries earlier than their surviving memorials. It carries weight with *Beowulf* only for lack of *other* evidence. Even then, it overlooks the obvious enough distinction between the interest that may lead to perusal, even admiration, of a literary work and the commitment that goes into its composition. (We are not surprised that Jacobean drama was published and produced in the early nineteenth century but we hardly rate Shelley's *Cenci* as a great play or indeed serious poetry.) In any case, the *Beowulf* manuscript is surely *poor* evidence for late tenth-century heroic tastes, in that whoever wrote it evidently valued it above all for its monsters. Admitting the force of Professor Andy Orchard's case that there is more in common between *Beowulf* and the rest of its codex than that, he would not, I think, claim that the spirit in which the poet wrote is as hostile to heroic excess as is the Old English *Letter of Alexander to Aristotle*; if he was, why was he more reticent in saying so?[5] At any rate, neither the *Beowulf* manuscript nor the other poetic codices are sufficient evidence in themselves that heroic themes were still well enough known in the later tenth century to give our poet the requisite confidence that his hints would be taken.

Evidence of such interests *can* actually be found from near the manuscript's time, especially if we are readier even than is the current fashion to invoke Æthelweard. Æthelweard is still too often read as the *Chronicle*'s ham-fisted translator. His was in fact a work of self-consciously secular history, as Professor Michael Winterbottom showed thirty years ago.[6] His much-discussed treatment of King Æthelwulf's genealogy may then be evidence not of an earlier and purer *Chronicle* version than those in the vernacular texts, but of his familiarity with the legend that Scyld was the son of Sceaf. Æthelweard was clearly keen to find heroes among his own royal ancestors. That was why he laboured the point that pagans turn their heroes into gods: a point at which the *Beowulf* poet may also hint, thinks Fred Robinson.[7] But before we see Ælfric's patron as that of the poem too, rather than (say) one of its

readers, we should note how he went out of his way to condemn pagan superstitions; and if there is a case for seeing him as having commissioned the Exeter Book, Joyce Hill has shown how *Widsith* as therein extant shows every sign that heroic memories were increasingly garbled.[8] We are less ignorant of the tenth century than Professor Stanley fears, but we shall not easily find there the audience anticipated by the poet. As it happens, a taste for worldly literature is not one of the brickbats thrown at the Winchester 'clerks' by their monastic enemies like Ælfric.[9]

The period before 875 is in most respects less well-lit than the time from Æthelstan's reign onwards. Yet, as I pointed out twenty-five years ago, earlier evidence *does* run both to Latin condemnations of the tastes and conduct deployed in *Beowulf*, and to genealogies which draw on heroic traditions. The rest of this essay takes a brief preliminary look at a body of evidence that in 1978 I adduced only in passing: the names taken by the aristocrats to whom the poet spoke, and whose interests and values he may still be thought (if not without his own reservations) to have enshrined.

The attached table charts the incidence of heroic names in contexts where the aristocracy may fairly be seen as represented: the major narratives like Bede, and still more important the witness-lists of charters, whose evidence has now been distilled in accessible and reliable form by the industry and acumen of Professor Simon Keynes.[10] But obviously I must start by acknowledging the limitations of this material. In the first place, the evidence is still decidedly unrefined. Research on Anglo-Saxon personal names has only now begun to share the long-time sophistication of place-name study; and continental scholars, who have taken it a lot further, concentrate on its implications for family structure as opposed to the social and cultural implications of name-giving as such.[11] My exercise is necessarily tentative, and doubtless sometimes wrong, in identifying forms; while diplomatic research has not yet advanced so far that we can be confident of the reliability or date of all witness-lists. I can only say that I try to err on the side of caution, bracketing identifications of which I am unsure and occurrences in questionable texts. Then again, I omit the evidence of coins and Domesday Book, to say nothing of my ignoring (with apologies) the majority of the human race in listing only men's names. Women's names are certainly not irrelevant. On the contrary: when Britain's last Prime Minister but one pointed out, as she liked to, 'my second name is Hilda, which means War' she was right – in more ways than one. But inasmuch as our business is with the massively masculine world of the poem and its audience, it makes as much sense to bypass the special problems of female nomenclature as to overlook the less elite spheres of the moneyer and of Domesday Book.

I am also aware of the exercise's conceptual hazards. People do not often today name their sons for what they think the names mean, or even because they feature in a beloved soap opera; I am named Patrick though neither an aristocrat nor Irish, because my homonymous uncle was killed at El Alamein. For Anglo-Saxon name-giving, we have the valuable if late information of the *Life of St Wulfstan*, that the

Table 2.1. The Incidence of names from OE heroic poetry in historical sources.[*]

Name	Before 840 excl. DLV	Before 840 DLV	Before 840 total	From 840 to 924	From 924 to 1042
Recorded in poetry and/or genealogy					
Æðilberht (**GeBe**) [Æthelbeohrt]	11	22	33	3	7
Ægelmund (**Wi** 117) [Æthelmund]	6	12	18	7	9
Ælfhere (**B** 2604: **Wa** A11, B18; **Ma** 80)	0	0	0	4	11
Ælfwine (**Wi** 70; **Ma** 211)	1	7	8	3	49
Ætla (**Wi** 18, 122: **Wa** A6)	1	0	1	0	0
-Bada-/Beadu-prefixes	2	69	71	3	0
-Beald-prefix	3	13	16	0	0
Beornstan	0	0	0	4	2
Beornwulf	4	15	19	8	2
Beow[ulf] (a) **B** 18, 53 etc; **GeWS2**; b) *passim*)	1	1	2	0	0
Billing (**Wi** 25)	0	1	1	0	0
- **Bill**- prefix	3	2	5	0	0
Cretta (**GeLi**)	1	1	2	0	0
- **Cuth** prefix	30	108	138	2	0
- **Dæg**- prefix	6	16	22	2	0
Eadgils (**B** 2392: **Wi** 936)	2	1	3	0	0
Eadwine (**Wi** 74, 117) [Edwin]	2	24	24	0	29
Eanmund (**B** 2611)	4	7	11	4	0
Ecglaf (**B** 499, etc.; **Ma** 267)	3	0	3	2	3
Elsa (**Wi** 117)	0	0	0	0	1
Eomer (**B** 1960; **GeMe**)	1	0	1	0	0
Eoppa (**GeBe**) [Eppa]	1	0	1	0	0
- **Eormen**- prefix	5	0	5	0	0
Finn (**B** 1063, 1159; **Wi** 27; [**Fi**]; **GeLi/WS2**)	1	0	1	0	0
Folcwalda (**B** 1089; **Wi** 27) [Folcwald]	0	1	0	0	0
Freoðoric (**Wi** 124) [Freothoric]	1	0	1	2	0
Freoð[o]wulf (**GeLi**)	0	3	3	0	0
Froda (**B** 2025)	1	0	1	0	0
Garmund	0	1	1	0	0
Garulf (**Fi** 20, 33)	0	0	0	2	1
Gislhere (**Wi** 123)	1	0	1	0	0
- **Guth** prefix	9	6	15	4	4
Hagena (**Wi** 21; **Wa** A15)	1	0	1	0	0
Hama (**B** 1198; **Wi** 124, 130)	1	2	3	0	0
Heardred (**B** 2388)	3	11	14	0	0
- **Helm**- prefix	5	22	27	2	1
Hengest (**B** 1083, etc.; **Fi** 19; **GeKe**)	1	0	1	0	0

Table 2.1. (*Continued*)

Name	Number of occurrences in historical sources				
	Before 840 excl. DLV	Before 840 DLV	Before 840 total	From 840 to 924	From 924 to 1042
Herebeald (**B** 2434, 2463) [Herebald]	1	8	9	0	0
Heremod (**B** 901, 1709: **GeWS2**)	2	1	3	3	2
Hereric (**B** 2206)	1	1	2	0	0
- Here(u)- prefix (excluding the above)	16	18	34	9	3
Hoc (**B** 1076; **Wi** 29?) see also **Hooc, Hocca**	3	0	3	0	0
- Hreð- prefix	1	0	1	0	0
- Hring- prefix	1	0	1	0	1
Hroðmund (**B** 1189; **GeEA**)	1	0	1	0	0
- Hroð prefix	3	8	11	2	1
Hun (**Wi** 33)	2	0	2	1	1
Hunlaf[ing] (**B** 1143)	2	0	2	1	2
Hwala (**Wi** 14; **GeWS2**)	1	0	1	0	0
Hygelac (**B** 194, 435, and *passim*) [Hyglac]	2	4	6	0	0
- Hyge- prefix (excluding Hygelac)	6	82	88	0	0
Ingeld (**B** 2064; **Wi** 459) [Ingild]	3	16	19	0	0
Offa (**B** 1949, 1957; **Wi** 3544; **Ma** 5, 198, etc.; **GeMe**)	7	9	16	0	2
Ohthere (**B** 2380, 2394, 2611)	0	0	0	1	0
Ordlaf (**Fi** 18)	0	1	1	1	1
Oswine (**Wi** 26)	4	0	4	0	0
- Ræd prefix	4	0	4	2	1
Sæfugul (**GeDe**)	1	0	1	0	0
Sce[a]f (**B** 4; **GeWS2**)	1	0	1	0	0
Sceafthere (**Wi** 32)	2	0	2	0	0
Scilling (**Wi** 103)	1	0	1	0	0
Scyld (**B** 4, 19, 26: **GeWS2**)	1	0	1	0	0
Sigeferth (**Fi** 17, 26) [Sigefrith]	4	0	4	5	12
Sigehere (**Wi** 28)	2	0	2	0	0
Sigemund (**B** 884)	0	2	2	2	0
- Tæt- prefix (cf. **GeWS2**)	1	1	1	0	0
Theodoric (**Wi** 24, 115: **De** 18, **Wa** B4) [Theoderic, Theodric]	3	0	3	1	0
Wada (**Wi** 22)	4	3	7	0	1
Wærmund (**GeMe**)	9	0	9	1	1
Wiglaf (**B** 2602, 2862, 3076, etc.)	2	1	3	3	0
Witta (**Wi** 22; **GeKe**) [Wita]	3	1	4	0	0
Wulfgar (**B** 348, 360)	1	1	2	4	31
Wulfhere (**Wi** 119)	1	3	4	10	6
Total (excluding prefixes): 58					

Table 2.1. (*Continued*)

Name	Number of occurrences in historical sources				
	Before 840 excl. DLV	Before 840 DLV	Before 840 total	From 840 to 924	From 924 to 1042
Recorded poetically only in Battle of Maldon					
Ælfnoth (183)	0	1	1	1	31
Ælfric (209)	2	0	2	20	94
Æscferð (267) [Æsfrith]	0	0	0	0	1
Æðelgar (320)	1	0	1	2	6
Æðelric (280) [Æthelric]	8	5	13	9	43
Byrhtnoth (17 and *passim*)	0	0	0	0	2
Byrhthelm (92) [Beorhthelm]	3	1	4	9	21
Byrhtwold (309) [Beorhweald]	0	2	2	0	1
Ceola (76)	1	0	1	0	0
Eadric (11)	3	1	4	1	42
Eadweard (117, 273) [Edward]	0	0	0	1	14
Eadwold (304) [Eadwald, Eadweald]	4	25	29	13	19
Ealhhelm (218)	3	0	3	5	8
Godric (a) 187, 237, 325; b) 321)	0	0	0	0	24
Godwine (192)	0	0	0	0	53
Leofsunu (243)	0	0	0	0	6
Maccus 80	0	0	0	0	1
Odda (186, 238)	0	0	0	3	3
Oswold (304) [Oswald]	5	1	6	4	0
Sibyrht (282) [Siberht]	0	0	0	0	3
Thurstan (298)	0	0	0	0	2
Wigelm (300)	0	2	2	0	0
Wulfmær (a) 113; b) 155)	0	0	0	0	21
Wulfstan (a) 75, 79; b) 155)	0	0	0	11	42
Total: 24					

Recorded only poetically (i.e. in poetry but not in historical sources)
Alewih (Wi 35), **Æschere** (B 1323 etc.), **Beanstan** (B 524, but see **Beorn** prefix), **Beadeca** (Wi 112, but see **Bada-/Beadu**-prefixes), **Becca** (Wi 19, 115), **Breca** (B 506; Wi 25), **Cælic** (Wi 20), **Dæghrefn** (B 2501, but see **Dæg**- prefix), **Dunnere** (Ma 255), **Eaha** (Fi 17), **Ecgþeow** (B 263 and *passim*), **Ecgwela** (B 1710), **Emerca** (Wi 113), **Eofor** (B 2486, 2964, 2993), **Eormanric** (B 1201; Wi 59, 88, 116; De 21; GeKe, but see **Eorman-/lurmen**- prefix), **Fridla** (Wi 113), **Gadda** (Ma 287), **Garmund** (B 1962), **Gefwulf** (Wi 26), **Gibica** (Wi 19), **Godwig** (Ma 192), **Guðhere** (Wi 66; Fi 20; Wa A25, but see **G/Cuð**-prefix), **Guðlaf** (B 1148; Fi 18, 23, but see **G/Cu** prefix), **Hæreð** (B 1929), **Hæðcyn** (B 2434, 2482, 2925), **Halga** (B 61), **Healfdene** (B 57, 189 and *passim*), **Heaþolaf** (B 460), **Heaþoric** (Wi 116), **Helm** (Wi 29, but see **Helm**- prefix), **Hemming** (B 1944, 1961), **Heoden** (Wi 21), **Heorogar** (B 61, 467, 2158), **Heoroweard** (B 2161), **Heorrenda** (De 39), **Heðca** (Wi 112), **Hliþe** (Wi 116), **Hnæf** (B 1069, 1114; Wi 29; Fi 42), **Holen** (Wi 33), **Hondscioh** (B 2076), **Hreðel** (B 374, 1485, *passim*, but see **Hreð**-prefix), **Hreðric** (B 1189, but see **Hreð**- prefix), **Hringwald** (Wi 34, but see **Hring**- prefix), **Hroðgar** (B 61 and *passim*; Wi 459, but see **Hroð**- prefix), **Hroþulf** (B 1017, 1181; Wi 459), **Hungar** (Wi 117), **Incgenðeow** (Wi 116), **Nithad** (De 5; Wa B8), **Onela** (B 2616, 2932), **Ongenðeow** (B 1968, 2387, 2486,

Table 2.1. (*Continued*)

2924, 2951, 2986; **Wi** 31), **Rædhere** (**Wi** 123, but see **Ræd-** prefix), **Rondhere** (**Wi** 123), **Rumstan** (**Wi** 123), **Sæferð** (**Wi** 31), **Secca** (**Wi** 115), **Seofola** (**Wi** 115), **Sifeca** (**Wi** 116), **Swerting** (**B** 1203), **Unferð** (**B** 499, 1165, 1488), **Unwen** (**Wi** 114), **Waldhere** (**Wa** B11), **Wæls** (**B** 897), **Weland** (**B** 455; **De** 1; **Wa** A2, B9), **Wihstan** (**B** 2752, etc.: **Ma** 297), **Wiþergield** (**Wi** 124), **Wod** (**Wi** 30), **Wonred** (**B** 2971), **Wudga** (**Wi** 124, 130 ?= **Wa** B4, 9), **Wulf** (**B** 2965, 2993), **Wyrmhere** (**Wi** 119), **Yrmenlaf** (**B** 1324, but see **Eorman-/Iurmen-** prefix).
Total: 71

Recorded only genealogically (i.e. in genealogies but not in other historical sources or in poetry)
Alusa (Be, WS1), **Angengeot** (Be, Me), **Bedwig** (WS2, but see **Bada-/Beadu-** prefixes), **Beldæg** (Be, WS1, but see **Beald-** prefix), **Brand** (WS1), **Ceser** (EA), **Cueldgils** (Li), **Frealaf** (De, etc.), **Freawine** (WS1), **Freoðogar** (WS1), **Geot** (Li,WS2), **Gewis** (WS1), **Godwulf** (Li, WS2), **Hathra** (WS2), **Hryp** (EA), **Ingibrand** (Be), **Itermon** (WS2), **Ocga** (Ke), **Oesc** (Be, Ke), **Sæbald** (De), **Siggar** (De), **Siggeot** (De), **Suebdæg** (De), **Tætwa** (WS2, but cf. **Tæt-** prefix), **Trygil** (EA), **Tyttman** (EA), **Wegbrand** (Be), **Wegdæg** (De, Ke), **Wehha** (EA), **Weoðulgeot** (Me), **Wig** (WS1), **Wilhelm** (EA), **Winta** (Li), **Wihtgils** (Ke), **Witlæg** (Me), **Woden** (De, etc.!)
Total: 35

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* This table has been compiled by Stephen Baxter using a list of names and references supplied by the author. It is not entirely clear precisely how the author intended to 'chart the incidence of heroic names', though it is evident that he intended to the table using the data which was then being assembled for *The Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England (PASE),* now published online. The current version of *PASE* incorporates data from most, but not quite all sources relating to the period prior to 1042; the most important exception for present purposes is the Durham *Liber Vitae* (abbreviated as DLV in the table) which was not captured in the first edition of *PASE* (though it will be in future editions). It is also clear that the author proposed to break the material down into three chronological periods: before 840, being the approximate *terminus ante quem* of material in the original core of the Durham *Liber Vitae*; between 840 and about 925, being a significant break in the charter evidence; and between about 925 and 1042, a date which allows the material in the *Liber Vitae* of New Minster, Winchester to be captured, and which corresponds with the cut-off point of the current edition of *PASE*. The table thus represents an attempt to chart the incidence of particular names throughout the periods in accordance with principles determined by the author. It comprises six columns. The first consists of the author's original list of 'heroic' names together with references to them in genealogical and poetic material. The remaining columns list the number of occurrences of each name within the three chronological periods specified by the author. The numbers given in the second, fifth and sixth columns represent the number of individuals who can be shown, using *PASE*, to have been active during these periods. Where a particular individual's career spans one of the cut-off points, he has been counted in the earlier of the two periods; thus, an individual who is known to have been active between 900 and 945 will be counted in the fifth column, not the sixth. The third column represents the number of entries in the pre-840 core of the Durham *Liber Vitae*; this has been treated separately since the volume of material this manuscript contains has a material impact on the statistics. The fourth column is simply the sum of the numbers in the second and third columns. Where the spelling of a name in *PASE* differs from that supplied by the author, the spelling used in *PASE* is supplied in square brackets. The author had clearly obtained sufficient data from the *PASE* research team and other sources to be in a position to write this appendix. However, it should be stressed that he did so without seeing the table printed here; for had he done so, he may have wished to modify the text of the appendix in order to reflect it more closely. However, it seems unlikely the author would have modified his main propositions and conclusions, for the table tends seems to bear these out. All the same, the table is, and should be read as a provisional and preliminary analysis: it represents an idea which may repay further research once the prosopographical foundations are more completely and securely laid. The following abbreviations for poems have been used in the table: **B** = *Beowulf*, **De** = *Deor*, **Fi** = *Finnsburh*, **Ma** = *Battle of Maldon*, **Wa** = *Waldhere*, **Wi** = *Widsith*. The following abbreviations for genealogies have been used in the table: **BE** = Bernicia, **DE** = Deira, **EA** = East Anglia, **KE** = Kent, **LI** = Lindsey, **ME** = Mercia, **WS1** = West Saxons 1, **WS2** = West Saxons 2. Alex Burghart and Andrew Wareham, who are currently involved in the research for the *PASE* and Durham *Liber Vitae* projects respectively, both provided valuable assistance in compiling this table.

first of his name's two elements was the prefix of his mother's, and the second the suffix of his father's. That is one reason why my table contains some prefix elements. But we also have the yet more pertinent evidence of the eighth-century *Life of Guthlac* that his name was perceived at the time to mean 'battle-reward (or -play)', which Fred Robinson makes the focus of an acute exploration of Old English sensitivity to onomastic etymology.[12] It thus seems prima facie reasonable to suppose that a class which regularly gave heroic names or name-elements to its sons is more likely to have been acquainted with heroic stories than one which had ceased to do so. Accordingly, I list all names occurring in *Beowulf*, *Widsith*, *Deor*, *Finnsburh* and *Waldhere*, note cases of their recurrence in the *Battle of Maldon*, and list separately names featuring only in Maldon. I include names in the upper reaches of royal genealogies since these perceptibly draw on the same traditions. Opposite each name come indications of the dates of the historical individuals that bore it. The first column ends with the historical horizon (*c*.840) of the earlier of the two major Old English *corpora* of personal names, the main hand in the Lindisfarne/ Durham *Liber Vitae*; and the last column includes material from its later counterpart, the *Liber Vitae* of New Minster Winchester, compiled in 1031.[13] The penultimate column concludes at a major hiatus in Anglo-Saxon history: the gap of two decades or more in the Anglo-Saxon diplomatic tradition between the quite copious charters of Edward the Elder's early years, and the birth of a remodelled practice at Æthelstan's court (represented by the year 924 for the purposes of the table).[14] It is a hiatus not without significance for our purposes.

For one crucial point can be made before examining the incidence of heroic names as such. It seems clear that there was a big shift in onomastic custom from the earlier tenth century. A high proportion of names given before 900 were not much used thereafter; favoured tenth- and eleventh-century names are rarely frequent earlier. The contrast is marked by that between the *Libri Vitae*. Granted that there are four times as many pre-Conquest entries in one as in the other, and that the former are (mostly) Northumbrian, the latter (largely) West Saxon, the way in which names marked as common on one horizon feature hardly if at all on the other, and vice versa, is highly suggestive. A nice example is the prefixes '**C/Guð-**' and '**God-**': there are no '**God-**' names among primary entries in the Lindisfarne book against eleven with '**C/Guð-**'; in the New Minster collection, there are no '**C/Guð-**' names but forty in '**God-**'. The effective replacement of an at least residually martial name-element (in spite of the reinforcement it should have received from Scandinavian arrivals) by one highlighting quite another quality might seem to have an ideological significance in itself.

Turning to the names of specific concern to us, you see that just over half the names in *Beowulf*, *Widsith* and the rest recur in historical records. If you look at the column to the right of the 924 hiatus (ignoring the *Maldon* appendix for the moment), you find that relatively few of those names appear at all and even fewer are at all common – you should recall that almost three-quarters of the charters supplying most of this evidence postdate 924. The main exceptions are the Old

English names **Ælfhere**, **Ælfwine**, **Eadwine**, **Wulfgar** and **Wulfhere**, and those boosted afresh by Scandinavian practice, **Ecglaf/Eilaf**, and **Sigeferth**. So far as the first set goes, it may or may not be relevant that two were the names of seventh-century kings celebrated by Bede; it is clearly relevant that the prefixes 'Ælf-', 'Ead-' and '**Wulf-**' were in intensive use anyway, so all names so formed are liable to be common. As regards Scandinavian names adduced by Professor Frank in her Toronto paper, it is surely fair to say that their appearance in the poem and in tenth-century circulation proves little either way.[15] If these *were* supposed names of sixth-century Scandinavian heroes, they could be expected to appear both in Heroic Age tradition and independently in current Scandinavian use. We do not need the latter to explain the former.

In any case, the three or four Scandinavian names in the poetry that were still current after 24 pale beside the number of those in English use before then but hardly, if at all, thereafter. Among these are the notorious sole case of a **Beowulf**, a monk in the Lindisfarne *Liber Vitae*; or **Hygelac**, a *lector* in Æthelwulf's *De Abbatibus* as well as in the *Liber Vitae*; or **Ingeld**, the name of King Ine's brother and also of the father of **Æðelmund**, the important *dux* of the Hwicce for King Offa.[16] Lesser poetic lights thus echoed are **Eanmund** and **Eadgils**, sons of **Ohthere** (whose own name appears only as that of King Alfred's Norse guest and of some rather less welcome Scandinavian visitors in the 910s); **Eanmund** was the name of a Kentish king in the 760s, of a Kentish landowner a century later and of a West Saxon thegn about the same time; also of two seemingly distinct earlier ninth-century Mercian abbots, and of a variety of clergy in Lindisfarne's *Liber Vitae* – one surely Æthelwulf's founder-abbot.[17] An **Eadgils** was deacon in wicked Coldingham (who may or may not be the *Liber Vitae clericus*), and another the West Saxon recipient of a grant in 801.[18] Neither name is found after 900. There are two or three **Freoþorics**, one a member of an important Mercian family involved in the foundations of Medeshamstede and Chertsey, and one an abbatial scion of the ninth-century Kentish squirearchy; there is **Hama**, forest-reeve of the Mercian king in 825; and not to be forgotten (if rather a surprise, given the poet's own views) are **Heremods** who were ninth-century clergy in Kent and Wessex respectively, either of whom (or a third such) was commemorated at Lindisfarne.[19] Special mention, finally, should go to Abbot **Hagen** in late seventh-century Kent, to Bishop **Waldhere** of London (693–*c*.716), author of a famous letter to the archbishop of Canterbury, and to my particular favourite, the Whitby monk and bishop of Dorchester *c*.680 who shared his name with **Ætla** the Hun.[20]

Noteworthy too are the prefixes shared by names of poetic heroes and of pre- but not post-900 Anglo-Saxon aristocrats: **Beada-** (another battle name, lest its best-known holder make you think otherwise), **Eorman-**, **Heaþo-**, **Hroþ-**, **Ræd-**, etc. Less is of course to be learned from these, especially when they have no particular warlike resonance. But the dithematic formation of Anglo-Saxon upper-class names at least raises the possibility that any other name with these elements was in

circulation; and when such elements are less frequent, as they are after 924, that would be less likely. Simply to compare the Lindisfarne *Liber Vitae* horizon, where a considerable majority of names find some echo, with that of its New Minster equivalent, where few do, is to see how much commoner heroic nomenclature was in earlier than in later Anglo-Saxon England.

But it is the contrast between the names of heroic protagonists and those of Maldon's casualties or their families that makes the point most clearly. Here is a poem whose traditional vocabulary and poetic technique is a byword, celebrating men who remained true to the heroic ideal to the last. Most of its characters have names that were common, sometimes very common, in the later Old English nobility; they feature as regularly in New Minster's *Liber Vitae* as those of the heroic cycle in Lindisfarne's. But just four of those who died for the '*eard, folc and foldan*' of their lord Æthelred, plus one of their fathers, bore the names of men whose life and death had once epitomized warrior loyalty to lords. One is an **Ælfhere** and one an **Ælfwine**, while a third is a classic exception to prove the rule. **Offa**'s name was that of one of the greatest not just of heroic but also of historic kings, one whose sword would soon feature among bequests by Æthelred's eldest son, and who was singled out for commendation by Æthelweard; it was also that of a king of local Essex, who earned Bede's praise for opting to abandon earthly power in favour of Roman pilgrimage.[21] It was thus a name bridging the worlds of heroism old and new, that of the Heroic Age proper and of a Bedan past that was increasingly the charter of the new kingdom of the English.

I make no claim that this body of evidence solves the problem of the date of *Beowulf.* Nothing can do that. But in a context where the prevalence of subjective assertion has fostered a corresponding and no less dogmatic agnosticism, here is *an indication* with some pretensions to objectivity. *Beowulf* is understandably, and for me persuasively, read as a work of transition, not impossibly a *response* to transition; an agonized concession that 'the wages of heroism is death' – the very reflection conjured up for a young Guthlac by contemplating 'the wretched deaths and shameful ends of the ancient kings of his *stirps*'.[22] There is no escaping the evidence that the *celebration* of pagan heroes was discouraged by the born-again idealists of the early medieval West. Nor should we forget that the fragmentary and/or accidental transmission of the heroic *corpus* shows that this ideological pressure had taken effect by the time the poetic codices were compiled. Upper-class nomenclature is a further pointer to the same conclusion. What it suggests is that the transition which haunted the poet could as well have been the time when the Alfredian kingdom's new ideology began to penetrate its *noblesse nouvelle* as that of the conversion itself. But unless we insist on a poet of quite exceptionally antiquarian taste and technique, working in an out-of-the-way environment of which we have no historic record (e.g. a Danelaw household that yet left his language unmarked), the onomastic record *does* tend to exclude the third Björk–Obermeier transition, the Anglo-Scandinavian era.[23] If it is right to argue that the

Beowulf poet would not have written as he did unless he expected his audience and/ or readers to pick up his allusions, the evidence is that by the tenth century he would have been deluded in thinking so.

The proposition I have put in this paper was essentially that of Hector Munro Chadwick in his immortal *Heroic Age*. His case was in part invalidated by misconceiving the nature of genealogies as well as by the then primitive state of charter study. Yet its foundations stand. There *was* such a thing as a Heroic Age in the post-Roman West. No one since Chadwick has come up with a better explanation of that period's intense political volatility.[24] On the Continent as well as in England, its most enduring legacy was a nobility whose names were predominantly Germanic and drawn largely from the warrior's world. *Beowulf* was surely not, as Chadwick thought, a poem *of* the Heroic Age. But it is a poem *about* the Heroic Age, and one most reasonably dated before, or perhaps *when*, its lustre was eclipsed by other varieties of hegemonial enthusiasm. My paper, then, is a reminder of what turn-of-the-twentieth-century Old English scholarship may be rather too prone to forget as it charges on into the twenty-first: the *eald enta geweorc* on whose parapets we all stand may contain sloppy, even sometimes worse than sloppy, thinking. But there was more to belief in a heroic world than self-indulgent Nietzschean romanticism. Those giants knew how to build the rubble of historical evidence into coherent intellectual structures. The edifices they constructed are ignored by us dwarves at the cost of our own vision.

NOTES TO THE ORIGINAL PAPER

1 One of several earlier (and shorter) drafts of this paper was read at Cornell to the Bede centenary class in the spring semester of 1973. I have to thank Cornell University for their original invitation, and Professor Farrell both for arranging my visit and for many helpful criticisms of my contribution. A multitude of other friends, fully commensurate with the size of this paper, assisted the emergence of my views, without deserving any blame for my errors of fact or judgement; I must, in particular, thank the late Miss M. E. Griffiths, Dr B. Mitchell, Professor J. Campbell and Dr M. T. Clanchy. Two articles which deeply influenced the thought of my paper in general terms were P. R. L. Brown, 'Aspects of the conversion of the Roman aristocracy', *JRS* 51 (1961), pp. 1–11 (reprinted in *Religion and Society*, pp. 161–82); and K. Leyser, 'The German aristocracy from the ninth to the early twelfth centuries: a social and cultural survey, *PP* 41 (1968), pp. 25–53 (reprinted in *Medieval Germany*, pp. 161–89). For Bede on birthdays, see G. Bonner, 'Bede and medieval civilization', *ASE* 2 (1973), p. 74. Laistner's famous essay is entitled 'The library of the Venerable Bede', *Bede,* ed. Thompson, pp. 237–66. For a conspectus of other celebratory literature, see the other essays in Thompson's volume, and W. F. Bolton, 'A Bede bibliography', *Traditio* 18 (1962), pp. 436–45.
2 Stenton, *ASE*, p. 187; cf. Colgrave's Introduction to *Eccl. Hist.*, p. xviii. Citations in this article from *HE*, HA and Ep. Ecgb. are from Plummer.

3   Editions of a good proportion of Bede's theological commentaries on the books of
    Scripture now exist in CCSL, mostly edited by D. Hurst; from a Cornell stable came
    M. L. W. Laistner's edition of the *Expositio Actuum Apostolorum* (Cambridge, Mass.,
    1939, repr. CCSL CXXI, 1983); C. W. Jones's edition of *Bedae Opera de Temporibus*
    (Cambridge, Mass., 1943); and Jones's edition of *In Principium Genesis* (CCSL CXVIIIA,
    1967), and of *Opera Didascalica* (CCSL CXXIIIA-C, 1975–80). [References to those
    published since 1975 are substituted below for the original's *PL* refs.] G. Musca *Il
    Venerabile Beda, storico dell'Alto Medioevo* (Bari, 1973), sets Bede's historical work in the
    context of his other writings, and P. Hunter Blair *The World of Bede* (London, 1970), the
    most modern extant study in English, was perhaps the first to describe Bede's literary
    activity in non-historical fields as fully and sympathetically as his historical work. Sister
    M. T. A. Carroll's *The Venerable Bede: His Spiritual Teachings* (Washington, DC, 1945)
    was another post-1935 landmark, inasmuch as it was the first modern full-length
    treatment of Bede's theology. *Famulus Christi* offers a series of important papers on the
    non-historical work of Bede, notably by P. Meyvaert, 'Bede as scholar', and by C. W.
    Jones, 'Bede and the medieval schools'.
4   R. W. Hanning, *The Vision of History in Early Britain* (New York, 1966); J. M. Wallace-
    Hadrill, *Early Germanic Kingship in England and on the Continent* (Oxford, 1971),
    pp. 72–97.
5   R. A. Markus, 'The chronology of the Gregorian missions to England', *JEH* XIV (1963),
    pp. 16–30; P. Meyvaert, *Bede and Gregory the Great* (Jarrow Lecture, 1964), pp. 8–13; and
    Appendix 1 of Dr Mayr-Harting's book cited in the next note, for effective criticism of the
    thesis of S. Brechter, *Die Quellen zur Angelsachsenmission Gregors des Grossen* (Munster, 1941),
    restated in *Sett. Spol.* XIV (1967), pp. 191–215. See G. Tessier, 'La conversion de Clovis et la
    christianisation des Francs', ibid., pp. 149–89, for the comparable Frankish problem. Not
    that Bede's chronology in general has escaped criticism: W. Levison, 'The beginning of the
    year of the incarnation in Bede', *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (Oxford,
    1946), pp. 265–79; P. Grosjean, 'La date du Colloque de Whitby', *Analecta Bollandiana*
    LXXVIII (1960), pp. 235–42; D. P. Kirby, 'Bede and Northumbrian chronology', *EHR*
    LXXXVIII (1963), pp. 514–27; J. Morris, *The Age of Arthur* (London, 1973), pp. 35–41; K.
    Harrison, 'The beginning of the year in England', *ASE* 2 (1973), pp. 55–9.
6   See Mayr-Harting, *Coming*, chapters 9, 12 and 13; for Bede's treatment of Wilfrid, see
    J. Campbell, 'Bede', in T. A. Dorey (ed.) *Latin Historians* (London, 1966), pp. 177–9 and
    nn. 74–6 at pp. 188–9; reprinted as 'Bede I', in *Essays*, pp. 1–27, at pp. 20–2.
7   J. Campbell, 'Bede I'; introduction to *Bede: The Ecclesiastical History and other selections*
    (New York, 1968) [reprinted as 'Bede II', in *Essays*, pp. 29–48]; and 'The first century of
    Christianity in England', *Ampleforth Journal* LXXVI (1971), pp. 12–29 [reprinted in
    Essays, pp. 49–67].
8   H. M. Chadwick, *Origins of the English Nation* (Cambridge, 1907); and *The Heroic Age*
    (Cambridge, 1912).
9   R. Girvan, *Beowulf and the Seventh Century* (2nd edn, with new chapter by R. L. S. Bruce-
    Mitford, London, 1971), esp. pp. 40–8; cf. W. W. Lawrence, *Beowulf and the Epic
    Tradition* (New York, 1928), pp. 57–8. References to *Beowulf* in this paper are by line
    from Klaeber's still standard text [see Abbreviations].

10   *HE* iii 14, pp. 155–6; *Beowulf* 64–7; Chadwick, *Heroic Age*, pp. 350–1. For other evidence in *Beowulf* for this type of warrior, see 331–55, 372–89 and 457–78; in Bede: *HE* iii 24, pp. 177–8; Ep. Ecgb. 11, pp. 414–15; in other early English sources: *Vit. Wilf.* lxvi, pp. 261–2; *Felix's Life of Guthlac*, ed. and trans. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1957), xvi–xix, pp. 80–3.

11   *Beowulf* 67–85, 662–5, 714–30, 767–82, 834–6, 920–7 for some significant references to Heorot; 452–5, 1027–34, 1192–1214 for treasures, weapons and heirlooms; 26–52, 3137–68 for burial customs. On Sutton Hoo, see R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, *The Sutton Hoo Ship-Burial: A Handbook* (2nd edn, British Museum, London, 1972), and supplementary chapter to Girvan, *Beowulf*, pp. 85–98. For Yeavering see the progress report of Dr Hope Taylor's excavation in *Medieval Archaeology* 1 (1957), pp. 148–9; and for their relevance to *Beowulf*, R. Cramp, '*Beowulf* and Archaeology', ibid., pp. 57–77.

12   D. Whitelock, *The Audience of Beowulf* (Oxford, 1951), pp. 39–53, 71–7, 79–82.

13   D. Whitelock, 'Anglo-Saxon poetry and the historian', *TRHS* 4th ser. 21 (1949), pp. 75–94, at pp. 78–9; M. Bloch, *Feudal Society*, trans. L. A. Manyon (London, 1961), p. 102.

14   Laws Æthelbert 13, 14, 75; Hlothere 1; Wihtred 5; Ine 30, 34:1, 45, 50, 51, 54, 63, 68, 70, *Gesetze*.

15   *HE* iv 22, p. 251.

16   S 89 is a notable example, also S 94; cf. Ep. Ecgb. 12, pp. 415–16.

17   D. Wilson, *The Anglo-Saxons* (2nd edn, London, 1971), pp. 108–26; full statistics, in need of detailed revision, in G. Baldwin Brown, *The Arts in Early England* (6 vols, London, 1903–37), III, pp. 193–6, 204–9. For continental comparisons, see F. Stein, *Adelsgräber des achten Jahrhunderts in Deutschland* (Berlin, 1967) and F. Irsigler, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des frühfränkischen Adels* (Bonn, 1969), pp. 186–220, especially pp. 128–207. For legal evidence bearing on the value of this weaponry, see Laws Ine 54:1, and the much later 'Nordleoda Laga' 10, *Gesetze*; and, on the Continent, *Lex Ribuaria*, ed. F. Beyerle and R. Buchner (MGH Leg. Sect. I iii) xl 11; *Leges Ahistulfi*, ed. F. Beyerle, *Gesetze der Langobarden* (Germanenrechte (Witzenhausen, 1962), 2–3.

18   See *Beowulf* 2596–7, 3169–82 for aristocratic escorts. For the use of *eorls* by the poet, see Klaeber's glossary, p. 324; *ceorl* is used four times in association with *snotor* (202, 416, 908, 1591), once of the father of the man on the gallows (2444), and once, incongruously, of King Ongentheow (2972; cf. 2951 'eorl'!).

19   Girvan, *Beowulf*, p. 41. For weapons in the poem, *Beowulf* 333–5 (cf. 321–7), 671–4, 1020–49, 1110–13, 1242–6, 2152–4, 2247–66, 2611–18, 2680–2, 2811–12, 2971–88; they are passed down the family as in later Anglo-Saxon wills, *Beowulf* 452–5 and 2156–62. Cf. also *Waldhere* A 2–5, 24–8, B 1–24, *Finnsburh* 12, 14–15, 17, 32, 46–7, *Hildebrandslied* 62, in *Runic and Heroic Poems of the Old Teutonic Peoples*, ed. and trans. B. Dickins (Cambridge, 1915), pp. 56–61, 64–9, 84–5.

20   A. Momigliano, 'Pagan and Christian historiography in the fourth century', in Momigliano (ed.), *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century* (Oxford, 1963), pp. 79–99, at p. 96; cf. P. R. L. Brown, 'Pelagius and his supporters: aims and environment', *JThS* NS XIX (1968), pp. 93–114, at p. 93 [reprinted in *Religion and Society*, pp. 183–207, at p. 183] – the reference in each case is to the lack of overlap between writers in the pagan and Christian traditions; see below, n. 38. R. W. Chambers, *Beowulf: An Introduction to the Study of the Poem* (3rd edn, Cambridge, 1959), pp. 128,

329, was impressed by the similarity of tone between history and epic; but cf. J. R. Hulbert, 'The Genesis of *Beowulf*, a caveat', *PMLA* LXVI (1951), pp. 1068–76, at p. 1170.

21 This is *not* to say that I would defend the traditional dating of the poem to the 'age of Bede', in defiance of the common sense of Professor Whitelock (cf. above, p. **33**, nn. 12–13). [For fuller discussion of the implications of the argument here advanced for the date of *Beowulf*, see the Appendix, pp. 71–81, a new product since original publication. I continue to think that *Beowulf* is likely to belong to the pre-Alfredian phase of Anglo-Saxon culture; it makes no difference to my argument whether the poem comes early or late in that period.]

22 J. R. R. Tolkien, '*Beowulf*, the monsters and the critics', *PBA* XXII (1936), pp. 245–95; much reprinted, but perhaps most accessibly in L. E. Nicholson (ed.), *An Anthology of Beowulf Criticism* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1963), pp. 51–103 [from which I cite it henceforth]. For reservations about Tolkien's thesis, see T. M. Gang, 'Approaches to *Beowulf*', *RES* NS III (1952), pp. 1–12; K. Sisam, *The Structure of Beowulf* (Oxford, 1965).

23 W. P. Ker, *Epic and Romance* (reprint, New York, 1957), pp. 165–7 (and cf. pp. 13–14 for the 'Homeric' perspective); W. P. Ker, *The Dark Ages* (London, 1904), pp. 252–4. For Ker's influence on his pupil, Chambers, *Widsith*, ed. R. W. Chambers (Cambridge, 1912), pp. 180–2; and on Stenton, *ASE*, 194–5.

24 E.g. Ker, *Epic*, p. 157; *Dark Ages*, pp. 250–1; Lawrence, *Epic Tradition*, pp. 10–11; Chambers, *Introduction*, pp. 121–8; Girvan, *Beowulf*, 12–13; Klaeber, pp. cxvii–cxxiv; but cf. Chadwick, *Heroic Age*, pp. 73–6; Chambers, *Introduction*, p. 109; Sisam, *Structure*, pp. 62–7. When speaking of 'literate composition', I am fully aware that medieval writers often dictated their material to a scribe, but such a process is significantly different from oral composition, or even from the procedure of Caedmon, *HE* iv 24, pp. 260–1, because the author can instantly read what he has dictated; the techniques of an oral poet are conditioned by the fact that he cannot read any more than he can write.

25 For examples of critics who have sought to integrate *Beowulf* with the scholarship of Latin Christianity, see Nicholson's *Anthology, paene passim*. Two writers, in particular, in that volume, who share Tolkien's caution about a more allegorical approach, are M. P. Hamilton, 'The religious principle in Beowulf', and R. E. Kaske, '*Sapientia et Fortitudo* as the controlling theme of *Beowulf*', pp. 105–35, 269–310; cf. also, M. W. Bloomfield, 'Patristics and Old English literature: Notes on Some Poems', pp. 367–72. For distinguished reassessments of the 'anomalies' of *Beowulf*, following Tolkien's example, A. Brodeur, *The Art of Beowulf* (Berkeley, Calif., 1959); A. Bonjour, *The Digressions in Beowulf* (Medium Aevum Monographs V, Oxford, 1965).

26 A. B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960); F. P. Magoun, 'The oral-formulaic character of Anglo-Saxon Narrtive Poetry', *Speculum* XXVIII (1953), pp. 446–67 (also in Nicholson's *Anthology*, pp. 189–221); R. P. Creed, 'The making of an Anglo-Saxon poem', *JELH* 26 (1959), pp. 445–54. For the critique, Brodeur, *Art of Beowulf*, chapters 1 and 2; L. D. Benson, 'The literary character of Anglo-Saxon formulaic poetry', *PMLA* LXXXI (1966), pp. 334–41; S. B. Greenfield, *The Interpretation of Old English Poems* (London, 1972), pp. 31–59, 122–30. On the general character of oral verse, G. S. Kirk, 'Formula, language and oral quality', *Yale Classical Studies* XX (1966),

pp. 155–74, at p. 174; W. Whallon, *Formula, Language and Context* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), p. 116; also J. Vansina, *Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology*, trans. H. M. Wright (London, 1965), pp. 55–62. On *Beowulf*'s resemblance to literate rather than oral verse, A. Campbell, 'The use in *Beowulf* of earlier heroic verse', *England before the Conquest*, pp. 283–92.

27 Klaeber, p. cxix, concluded from the poet's literacy that he was probably a cleric, as did Professor Whitelock (*Audience*, 19–20). It is significant that those modern scholars most inclined to emphasize the relative 'paganism' of the Beowulf poet have been those most influenced by the oral-formulaic school: see Whallon, *Formula*, p. 118, together with his 'The Christianity of *Beowulf*', *MP* 60 (1962), pp. 81–94, and 'The Idea of God in *Beowulf*', *PMLA* LXXX (1965), pp. 19–23; R. D. Stevick, 'Christian elements and the genesis of *Beowulf*', *MP* 61 (1963), pp. 79–89; M. D. Cherniss, *Ingeld and Christ* (The Hague, 1972), pp. 16–29 and 120–50.

28 J. W. Thompson, *The Literacy of the Laity in the Middle Ages* (reprint, New York, 1963), pp. 116–22, and J. W. Adamson, *The Illiterate Anglo-Saxon and other Essays* (Cambridge, 1946), pp. 11–17, argue the opposite, but neither is a satisfactory basis for further discussion. By far the most important survey of the problem in early medieval Europe as a whole is that of H. Grundmann, 'Litteratus-illiteratus', *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* XL (1958), pp. 1–65, and see also P. Riché, 'L'Enseignement et la culture des laïcs dans l'Occident pré-Carolingien', *Sett. Spol.* XIX (1972), pp. 231–53. For further debate upon the problem, see my 'The Uses of Literacy in Anglo-Saxon England and its neighbours', *TRHS* 5th ser. 27 (1977), pp. 95–114. In suggesting that literate composition implies monastic authorship, I differ both from Whitelock, *Audience*, pp. 19–20, and from Wallace-Hadrill, *Early Germanic Kingship*, p. 212; and this is a prospect no scholar can relish. Nevertheless, I cannot see the force of the argument that *Beowulf* is too massive an irrelevance for a monastic scriptorium, given that monks were prepared to be entertained by such literature (see pp. 41, 50, and nn. 51, 89, 90); and given that at least one community, and arguably several, were prepared to 'waste' valuable parchment on preserving *Beowulf* for posterity. [This is a topic that has grown exponentially and in far from uniform directions since 1977, too much so for further discussion in this book.]

29 For Aldfrith, *HE* iv 26, v 15, pp. 268, 317; HA 15, p. 380; *Vit. Wilf.* xliv, pp. 238–9. Cf. Plummer's note, II, pp. 263–4, and, for Aldfrith's identity with Aldhelm's Acircius, *Aldhelmi Opera*, ed. R. Ehwald (MGH, AA XV, Berlin, 1919), p. 61, n. 1. For lay nobles and their education, HE v 13, pp. 312–13; *Vit. Wilf.* xxi, p. 216; also *Education and Culture*, pp. 322–3, 395–6 (pp. 369–70, 445–6).

30 *Asser's Life of King Alfred*, ed. W. H. Stevenson (2nd edn, Oxford, 1959), 32–5, 75–7, 87–9, 106, pp. 19–22, 58–63, 73–5, 94–5.

31 D. A. Binchy, 'The background of early Irish literature', *Studia Hibernica* I (1969), pp. 7–18, at pp. 10–11; D. O'Corrain, *Ireland Before the Normans* (Dublin, 1972), pp. 74–9.

32 Compare, e.g., J. Fleckenstein, *Die Hofkapelle der deutschen Könige* I (Stuttgart, 1959), esp. pp. 74–95, with Chaplais, 'Origin', and 'Chancery', pp. 160–6; and compare B. Bischoff, 'Die Hofbibliothek Karls des Grossen', in W. Braunfels (gen. ed.), *Karl der Grosse* (4 vols, Düsseldorf, 1965), II, pp. 42–62 (also in his *Mittelalterliche Studien*.

Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Schriftkunde und Literaturgeschichte (3 vols, Stuttgart, 1967–81), III, pp. 149–69; [and trans. M. Gorman, *Manuscripts and Libraries in the Age of Charlemagne* (Cambridge, 1994, ch. 3)]; with N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957), nos 39, 42; F. Wormald, *The Benedictional of St Ethelwold* (London, 1959), p. 10, 'The "Winchester School" before St. Aethelwold', *England before the Conquest*, pp. 305–13 [see also chs 5, 7, below].

33   J. Goody, 'Restricted literacy in Northern Ghana', in Goody (ed.), *Literacy in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 199–264. For early medieval methods of education, *Education and Culture*, pp. 423–39 (pp. 499–520).

34   Ker, *Dark Ages*, pp. 250–2; Ker, *Epic*, pp. 79–93, 116–22; A. Campbell, 'The Old English epic style', in N. Davis and C. L. Wrenn (eds), *English and Medieval Studies for J. R. R. Tolkien* (London, 1962), pp. 13–26; cf. also M. L. W. Laistner, *Thought and Letters in Western Europe, 500–900* (Ithaca, NY, 1957), p. 370, whose view is especially significant in that it was founded on the author's profound knowledge of early medieval culture as a whole.

35   Tolkien, '*Beowulf* ', p. 69.

36   *Beowulf* 175–83, 1107–24, 2124–28, 2802–8, 3096–182. Cf. e.g. *Codex Theodosianus*, ed. T. Mommsen and P. M. Meyer (2 vols in 3, 3rd edn, Berlin, 1962) XVI x 12; *Childeberti Praeceptum*, *Cap.* I, pp. 2–3; *Cap.* 26:7,9 ('de part. Sax.'), 108 ('Indic. Superstit. et Pagan.'), I, pp. 69, 222–3. Cf. also an anonymous sermon of Charlemagne's time, printed, along with other relevant material, by W. Lange, *Texte zur germanischen Bekehrungsgeschichte* (Darmstadt, 1962), pp. 168–72.

37   *Beowulf* 685–7, 700–2. Cf. also 1700–84 for Hrothgar's speech to Beowulf, the most concentrated passage of 'Christian' wisdom in the poem; and F. Klaeber, 'Die christlichen Elemente in *Beowulf* I', *Anglia* XXXV (1911–12), pp. 112–27. A similar style of deity appears in *Waldhere*, A 23, B 25–9, pp. 58–9, 62–3; and *Hildebrandslied* 30, 49, pp. 80–3.

38   Professor Whallon has argued that the poet's words for God are no more Christian than is similar terminology when used by Plato or Vergil, and that they are cognate with similar terminology in the Norse Elder Edda. But Germanic paganism, which was the only serious available alternative to Judaeo-Christian revelation for the *Beowulf* poet, was undoubtedly basically polytheistic, as is established by the names for the days of the week, and by the Old Saxon baptismal formula, *Cap.* 107, I, p. 222. When Scandinavians gravitated towards monotheism, this was either out of loyalty to one God among several, or under Christian influence, already marked in Iceland by *c.*900. See J. de Vries, *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte* (2 vols, 2nd edn, Berlin, 1956–7), I, p. 4, II, pp. 11, 27, 47–8, 110, 302, 306; K. D. Schmidt, *Die Bekehrung der Germanen zum Christentum* (Göttingen, 1939), pp. 158–60; H. Kuhn, 'Das Fortleben des germanischen Heidentums nach der Christianisierung', *Sett. Spol.* XIV (1967), pp. 743–57. It must be Christian influence that is responsible for the way in which Snorri attributes to Othinn some of the qualities of the Christian God, and, generally speaking, Othinn is neither Creator nor Judge: see G. Turville-Petre, *Myth and Religion of the North* (London, 1964), pp. 35, 55–6; K. Helm, *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte* (2 vols, Heidelberg, 1953), II, pp. 262–3; de Vries, II, pp. 84–7. We know that Caedmon and the authors of *Genesis* and *Exodus* applied the same terminology to their Christian God as did the *Beowulf* poet

to his; it seems perverse to suggest that such language is nevertheless essentially pagan on the basis of Scandinavian evidence that can hardly be purely pagan itself.

39 *Beowulf* 90–101, 175–88. Brodeur, *Art of Beowulf*, pp. 187–208, successfully rebuts the suggestions in Tolkien's Appendix, pp. 91–103, and argues that the poet's attitude to pagans was not unsympathetic.

40 *Beowulf* 106, 1572 and 1600; Whitelock, *Audience*, pp. 5–6.

41 *Beowulf* 198, 1663, 2140, 2280 and 3051; G. V. Smithers, 'Destiny and the heroic warrior in *Beowulf*', in J. L. Rosier (ed.), *Philological Essays in Honour of H. D. Meritt*, (The Hague, 1970), pp. 65–81, at pp. 71–3.

42 *Beowulf* 477–9, 572 (cf. 2291–3), 697 and 2814–16; but also 1056–8 and 1657–64. Among critical authorities, contrast B. J. Timmer, '*Wyrd* in Anglo-Saxon prose and poetry', *Neophilologus* 26 (1940–1), pp. 24–33, 213–28; and E. G. Stanley, 'The quest for Anglo-Saxon paganism', *Notes and Queries* NS 11 (1964), pp. 204–9, 242–50, 282–7, 325–31, 455–63, NS 12 (1965), pp. 7–17, 203–7, and (for this point) 285–93, 322–7, reprinted as a book under that title (London, 1975), and now again in his *Imagining the Anglo-Saxon Past* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. xiii–110; with A. Roper, 'Boethius and the three fates of *Beowulf*', *PQ* 41 (1962), pp. 386–400; and Smithers, 'Destiny', pp. 66–75. For the background in Germanic paganism, Helm, *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte* II, pp. 280–5; de Vries, *Religionsgeschichte* I, pp. 267–74.

43 *Beowulf* 90–8, 106–14, 1258–78, 1687–93; for judgement, 588–9, 850–2, 977–9 and 2820; and for other possible echoes of the afterlife, 1201, 1759–60 and 2468–9. Among critics, contrast J. Halverson, '*Beowulf* and the pitfalls of piety', *Toronto University Quarterly* 55 (1965–6), pp. 260–78, at p. 268, and E. John, '*Beowulf* and the margins of literacy', *BJRL* LVI (1973/4), pp. 388–422, with Whitelock, *Audience*, p. 5.

44 J. Clark Hall, *Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg: A Translation into Modern English Prose* (London, 1901), pp. xlvi–xlvii.

45 E.g. *Beowulf* 491–8, 611–31, 1159–62, 1232–3 for wine, women and song, 1020–49, 2752–93 for treasures. Cf. Sisam, *Structure*, pp. 11–13.

46 *Beowulf* 1383–9. Cf. C. Moorman, 'The essential paganism of *Beowulf*', *MLQ* 28 (1967), pp. 4–6; E. G. Stanley, '*Haethenra Hyht* in *Beowulf*', in S. B. Greenfield (ed.), *Studies in Old English in Honour of A. G. Brodeur* (Eugene, Oreg., 1963), pp. 136–51 [reprinted in his *Collection of Papers with Emphasis on Old English Literature* (Publications of the Dictionary of Old English 3, Toronto, 1987), pp. 192–208].

47 *Beowulf* 3169–82. Cf. Klaeber, pp. xlix–li, and 'Christliche Elemente IV', *Anglia* XXXVI (1912), pp. 175–9; Chambers, *Introduction*, pp. 102, 324–6; Hulbert, 'Genesis of *Beowulf*', p. 1170; but cf. Smithers, 'Destiny', pp. 76, 80.

48 Nicholson's *Anthology* contains several examples of this approach, e.g. D. W. Robertson, 'The doctrine of charity in medieval literary gardens', A. Cabaniss, '*Beowulf* and liturgy', M. B. Macnamee, '*Beowulf*: an allegory of salvation?' and M. E. Goldsmith, 'The Christian perspective in *Beowulf*'. Cf. also Nicholson's own essay, 'The literal meaning and symbolic structure of *Beowulf*', *Classica et Medievalia* 25 (1964) and J. Gardner, 'Fulgentius . . . and the plan of Beowulf . . .', *Papers on Language and Literature* 6 (1970), pp. 227–62. The most striking monument to the approach is M. E. Goldsmith, *The Mode and Meaning of Beowulf* (London, 1970); cf. her contribution to the debate between herself, Professor Whallon and Professor C. Donahue, 'Allegorical, typological

or neither?', *ASE* 2 (1973), pp. 289–90. For some effective objections, see Greenfield, *Interpretation*, 140–54; A. Bonjour, '*Beowulf* et le démon de l'analogie', *Twelve Beowulf Papers* (Neufchâtel, 1962), pp. 173–9, at 183–9; Donahue's contribution to the debate in *ASE* 2 (1973), pp. 292–6; and P. Rollinson, 'The influence of Christian doctrine and exegesis upon Old English poetry', ibid., pp. 271–84.

49   Chambers, *Introduction*, pp. 102 and 324–6; Tolkien, '*Beowulf*', p. 71; Chadwick, *Heroic Age*, p. 73; Whitelock, *Audience*, pp. 5–12, 19–22; Sisam, *Structure*, pp. 72–9.

50   H.-I. Marrou, *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique* (Bibliothèque des Ecoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 145, Paris, 1938), plus *Retractatio* (1949), p. 50; Marrou, *History of Education in Antiquity*, trans. G. Lamb (London, 1956), pp. 318–24; M. L. W. Laistner, *Christianity and Pagan Culture in the Later Roman Empire* (Ithaca, NY, 1951); Laistner, *Thought and Letters*, pp. 44–53, 108–10; H. Chadwick, *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition* (Oxford, 1966). The only similar work on Germanic literature known to me is H. Kuhn, 'Heldensage und Christentum', in K. Hauck (ed.), *Zur germanischdeutschen Heldensage* (Darmstadt, 1965), pp. 416–26, which, like most of this scholar's valuable work, consistently overestimates the mutual compatibility of Germanic and Mediterranean traditions. Cherniss, *Ingeld and Christ*, and R. Levine, 'Ingeld and Christ, a medieval problem', *Viator* 2 (1971), pp. 105–28, discuss the problem from an almost exclusively literary angle.

51   *Alc. Ep.* 124, p. 183.

52   *Beowulf* 2020–69; *Widsith* 45–9, and cf. Chambers' introduction, pp. 79–84; Chambers, *Introduction*, 20–5; Klaeber's edn, pp. xxxiv–xxxvi, 202–3.

53   Thus Kuhn, 'Heldensage', pp. 416–17; also Chambers, *Introduction*, pp. 123, 332; Brodeur, *Art of Beowulf*, p. 216; Goldsmith, *Mode*, pp. 10–12, 53, 177–8.

54   'Regula cuiusdam patris ad Virgines' ix, *PL* LXXXVIII, 1061–2. On the origins of this Rule, see L. Gougaud, 'Inventaire des règles monastiques irlandaises', *Rev. Ben.* 25 (1908), pp. 167–84, 321–33, at pp. 328–31. For other comparable monastic legislation, cf. 'Regula Caesarii ad Virgines' xix, ed. G. Morin, *Sancti Caesarii Opera* (2 vols, Maretioli, 1942) II, p. 105; 'Regula Ferreoli' xxiv, *PL* LXVI, 967–8; *RB* xliii, xlviii, II, pp. 588–9, 602–3 and nn.; 'Regula Leandri' v, vii, *PL* LXXII, 883–4; 'Regula Isidori' vi, ix, *PL* CIII, 561, 563; 'Regula Donati' xx, *PL* LXXXVII, 281–2.

55   Conc. Tol. III (589) vii, ed. J. Vives, *Concilios Visigoticos e Hispano-Romanos* (Madrid, 1963), p. 127; *Wulfstan's Canons of Edgar* lix, ed. R. Fowler (EETS, London, 1972), pp. 14–15, 38–9. Cf. also, e.g., *Cap.* 22:71 (*Admonitio Generalis*, 789), I, p. 59; 196:54 (*Episcoporum relatio ad Hludovicum regem*, 829), II, pp. 45–6.

56   Conc. Clov. (746/7) xii, *Councils*, pp. 366–7.

57   Epistola de obitu Bedae, ed. Plummer I, p. clxi; *HE* iv 24, 25, 22, pp. 258–61, 265, 250. Cf. Bede's prose Life of St Cuthbert xxvii, *Two Lives of St Cuthbert*, ed. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1940), pp. 246–7; *Bede, In Sam.* II xiii 20, xiv 27, ed. D. Hurst (CCSL CXIX, 1962), pp. 112, 114. See Hunter Blair, *World of Bede*, pp. 286–8.

58   *William of Malmesbury, Gesta Pontificum*, ed. N. E. S. A. Hamilton (RS 52, 1970), p. 336.

59   *Jerome, Epistolae* xxii 29–30, ed. I. Hilberg (CSEL LIV, 1996), pp. 188–91; cf. *Tertullian, De Praescriptione Haereticorum* vii 9, ed. R. F. Refoulé (CCSL I, 1964), p. 193,

Apologeticum, ed. E. Dekkers, xlvi 18, p.162; *Gregorii Magni Epistolae* xi 34, ed. P. Ewald and L. M. Hartmann (MGH, Ep. II, Berlin, 1893), p. 303; cf. the literature referred to above, n. 50, and Hunter Blair, *World of Bede*, pp. 282–3.

60   The early medieval West developed a distinctive literature of barbarian kingship from the seventh century at the latest. See J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'The *Via Regia* of the Carolingian Age', in B. Smalley (ed.), *Trends in Medieval Political Thought* (Oxford, 1965), pp. 22–41, and *Early Germanic Kingship, passim*; H. H. Anton, *Fürstenspiegel und Herrscherethos in der Karolingerzeit* (Bonner Historische Forschungen 32, Bonn, 1968), esp. pp. 357–446; W. Ullmann, *The Carolingian Renaissance and the Idea of Kingship* (London, 1969). But in the last resort the most striking feature of this ideology is its unitary perspective: kings, bishops, priests and laymen are all to take their model from the same divine hierarchy of values, as revealed in the Bible and enunciated by the Church. Dual standards appear only under Aristotelian influence in the thirteenth century: W. Ullmann, *Principles of Government and Politics in the Middle Ages* (2nd edn, London, 1966), pp. 231–79.

61   *Greg. Ep.* as n. 59; *Jonas, De Institutione laicali* i 11, 13, *PL* CVI, cols 143–4 and 147. Cf. Bede, Homily i 22, ed. D. Hurst, *Opera Homiletica* (CCSL CXXII, 1955), p. 160, and also the remarks of the Council of Paris (829), ed. A. Werminghoff, *Conc. AK* I (MGH, Leg. Sect. III, Hannover, 1906), pp. 657–8, which was here under Jonas's influence: Anton, *Fürstenspiegel*, pp. 204–18.

62   *Einhard, Vita Karoli* 29, ed. O. Holder-Egger (MGH, SRG 25, 6th edn, 1911), p. 33, *Thegan, Vita Hludovici Imperatoris* 19, ed. E. Tremp (MGH, SRG 64, 1995), pp. 200–1, 204–5. Attempts have been made to evade the implications of this passage by denying that Thegan can be referring to vernacular verse: G. Kurth, *Histoire poétique des Mérovingiens* (Paris, 1893), pp. 55–6; but cf. Grundmann (n. 28 above), p. 41, who rightly challenges Kurth, and links Louis's behaviour to the expressed principles of Alcuin. [See now 'Additional Note', p. 102.]

63   Romans 1:18–23, 2:6–7, 13–15. Cf. A. D. Horgan, 'Religious attitudes in Beowulf', in W. W. Robson (ed.), *Essays and Poems Presented to Lord David Cecil* (London, 1970), pp. 9–17, at pp. 9–12; Hamilton, 'Religious principle', pp. 110–13; Goldsmith, *Mode*, pp. 149–57, 180–2.

64   P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (London, 1967), pp. 307–8, quoting Augustine's letter to Bishop Evodius, *Epistolae* CLXIV, ed. A. Goldbacher (CSEL XLIV, 1904), pp. 521–41. Gregory did say that 'infideles' should not be prayed for: *Moralia in Job* xxxiv 19, *PL* LXXVI, 739.

65   C. N. L. Brooke, *The Twelfth-Century Renaissance* (London, 1969), pp. 155–62. This point is missed by Kuhn, who also ignores the fact that, although many of the Gothic heroes, like Theodoric, were Christian, they were Arian, and, as such, doubly damned.

66   *Bede, In Cantica Canticorum*, ed. D. Hurst (CCSL CXIXB, 1983) Pr., pp. 177–8. Miss Hamilton herself pointed out that Anglo-Saxon Christian poets were obsessed by the difference between the chosen and the damned ('Religious principle', pp. 111–12) and this is precisely the issue that *Beowulf* avoids: E. G. Stanley 'Haethenra Hyht', pp. 137–43 (pp. 192–9). On all this, see the excellent remarks of C. Donahue in the articles referred to below, n. 83.

67   *Annales Xantenses, s.a.* 718, ed. G. H. Pertz (MGH, SS II, 1829), p. 221.

68   *Br. Bon.* 46, 73, pp. 74–5, 150; cf. *EHD*, I, pp. 812–13. For a rather different interpret-
     ation of this correspondence, see the essay by L. D. Benson, referred to below, n. 86.
69   *HE* i 27, pp. 51–2, i 30, pp. 65–6.
70   'Penitential of Theodore' II i 4–5, *Councils*, pp. 190–1.
71   *Nicholas, Epistolae* 99, quu. 47, 59, 88, ed. E. Perels (MGH Ep. KA IV, Berlin, 1912),
     pp. 585–6, 588 and 596. Bede's interpretation of the passage from St John was, however,
     more liberal: *In Epistolas VII Catholicas*, ed. D. Hurst (CCSL CXXI, 1983), pp. 325–6.
72   H. M. and N. K. Chadwick, *The Growth of Literature* (3 vols, Cambridge, 1940), I, pp.
     556–7.
73   *Alc. Ep.* 136, p. 209; 178, p. 294; 309, p. 475; cf. his *Carmen* lxxviii, ed. Dümmler
     (MGH, Poet. I, Berlin, 1880), p. 299; *Vita Alcuini*, ii, xvi, ed. W. Arndt (MGH, SS XV,
     1887), pp. 185, 193. For the artificiality of much of the hostility thus traditionally
     expressed, see the works cited above, n. 50, plus J. Leclercq, *L'Amour des lettres et le désir
     de Dieu* (Paris, 1957), pp. 40–52, 108–41 [trans. C. Misrahi, *The Love of Learning and
     the Desire for God*, London, 1978), pp. 45–61, 139–87]; H. de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale*
     (2 vols, Paris, 1959–64), I, pp. 67–73, 290–6, II i, pp. 53–77; P. Meyvaert, *Bede and
     Gregory the Great*, p. 14.
74   *Augustine, De Doctrina Christiana* ii 40–2 (62–3), ed. J. Martin (CCSL XXXII, 1962),
     pp. 73–7; cf. Marrou, *Saint Augustin*, pp. 387–413; *Hraban Maur, De clericorum
     institutione* iii 18, *PL* 107, 396; de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale* I, pp. 290–6, II ii, 182–
     97; Theodulf, 'De libris quos legere solebam . . .', ed. Dümmler (MGH, Poet. I),
     pp. 543–4.
75   *Hraban, De cler. inst.* iii 18, as above.
76   *Asser, Life of Alfred* 75, p. 59.
77   *Cassiodorus, Institutiones* i 8, ed. R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1937), p. 14; cf. *Jerome Ep.*
     cvii 12 (CSEL, LV), p. 303. As Professor Donahue points out in his contribution to the
     'Allegorical . . .' debate, pp. 292–3, Augustine believed that teachers should not imitate
     the 'salubrious obscurity' of Holy Writ: 'their first and special aim should be that they are
     understood', *De Doct. Christ.* iv 8, pp. 131–2.
78   *Otfrids Evangelienbuch*, pr., ed. O. Erdmann (Halle, 1882), p. 4. The other works are the
     translation of Tatian, still in a Fulda manuscript, and the *Heliand* itself, which is based,
     in part, on Hraban's commentary on St Matthew, and on Tatian. Cf. Laistner, *Thought
     and Letters*, pp. 375–6.
79   For the *Hildebrandslied*, see the edition and translation by Dickins, cited above, n. 19;
     Waltharius, ed. K. Strecker (MGH, Poet. VI i, Weimar, 1951), pp. 1–85.
80   Ker, *Catalogue*, no. 216; cf. K. Malone, *The Nowell Codex* (EEMSF 12, Copenhagen,
     1963), and K. Sisam, 'The compilation of the Beowulf Manuscript', *Studies in the
     History of Old English Literature* (Oxford, 1953), pp. 65–96. The manuscript fragments
     of *Finnsburh* and *Maldon* are now lost; for *Waldhere*, Ker, *Catalogue* 101. *Widsith* and
     Deor are respectively ff. 84v–87 and 100–100v of the *Exeter Book*, Ker, *Catalogue* 116,
     and R. W. Chambers, M. Forster and R. Flower (eds), *The Exeter Book of Old English
     Poetry* (London, 1933).
81   *Greg. Moral.*, pr. iii, 513 contains a side-swipe at secular literature.
82   *Bede, In Princ. Gen.*, ed. Jones, p. 1. But Acca himself was a noted book-collector, *HE* v
     20, p. 331, and quoted Jerome and Augustine in the letter that called forth Bede's *In*

Luc., ed. D. Hurst (*CCSL* CXX, 1960), pp. 5–6. Cf. J. D. A. Ogilvy, *Books Known to the English, 597–1066* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967) – it is important to use this second edition, in that it incorporates most of the research of *CLA*; I doubt whether the palaeographical evidence will support Professor Ogilvy's much-quoted assertion (p. 14) that, in general, it would be safer to assume that the early English knew any given work of Augustine's than that they did not.

83   C. Donahue, '*Beowulf*, Ireland and the Natural Good', *Traditio* 7 (1949–51), pp. 263–77; '*Beowulf* and the Christian Tradition: a reconstruction from a Celtic standpoint', ibid., 21 (1965), pp. 55–116; Can. Hib. iii 8, ed. L. Bieler, *The Irish Penitentials* (Dublin, 1963), pp. 168–9; R. Flower, *The Irish Tradition* (Oxford, 1947), p. 8. Cf. K. Hughes, 'Sanctity and secularity in the early Irish Church', in D. Baker (ed.), *Studies in Church History* 10 (Oxford, 1973), pp. 21–37, at p. 28; *Br. Bon.* 59, pp. 110–12.

84   *The Tain*, trans. T. Kinsella (Oxford, 1970), p. 1; F. J. Byrne, 'The Ireland of St. Columba', in J. L. McCracken (ed.), *Irish Historical Studies* V (Dublin, 1965), pp. 37–58, at p. 39, 'Seventh-century documents', *Proceedings of the Irish Catholic Historical Committee* (1965–7), pp. 5–23, at p. 8. But the Collectio Canonum Hibernensis lx 3, ed. H. Wasserschleben, *Die Irische Kanonessammlung* (Leipzig, 1874), p. 257, is a typical canon against lax standards of entertainment in clerical contexts.

85   Donahue, '*Beowulf*, Ireland', pp. 273–4; J. Carney, 'The Irish elements in *Beowulf*', *Studies in Irish Literature and History* (Dublin, 1955), pp. 77–128, esp. pp. 97–8, 102–22. For the Scandinavian analogues, G. V. Smithers, *The Making of Beowulf* (Durham, 1961) is the culmination of a tradition that began with Lawrence, *Beowulf and the Epic Tradition*, pp. 161–203. On Lindisfarne in the later seventh century, see Mayr-Harting, *Coming of Christianity*, pp. 225–6 [but see now Additional Note, pp. 102–3]. Goldsmith, *Mode*, pp. 22–39, cannot be considered to have answered Professor Donahue's case; the Irish Church may have been as orthodox doctrinally, and even as cosmopolitan culturally, as most others, but there remains overwhelming evidence for distinct idiosyncrasies in the Christian civilization of early Ireland: see, e.g., B. Bischoff, 'Wendepunkte in der Geschichte der lateinischen Exegese im Frühmittelalter', *Sacris Erudiri* 6 (1954), pp. 189–220, reprinted in *Mittelalterliche Studien* I, pp. 205–29; K. Hughes, *The Church in Early Irish Society* (London, 1966); and F. J. Byrne, *Irish Kings and High-Kings* (London, 1973); Goldsmith ignores the actual evidence for a cult of the pagan hero in early Ireland. [For the 'new mood' in Old Irish studies (much influenced by Carney), see Additional Note to chapter 7, pp. 6, pp. 217–8.]

86   L. D. Benson, 'The pagan coloring in *Beowulf*', in R. P. Creed (ed.), *Old English Poetry: Fifteen Essays* (Providence, RI, 1967), pp. 193–213. For the manuscript of the *Hildebrandslied*, see B. Bischoff, 'Paläographische Fragen deutscher Denkmäler der Karolingerzeit', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 5 (1971), pp. 101–24, at pp. 112–13, *Mittelalterliche Studien* III, pp. 73–111, at p. 87.

87   D. A. Binchy, 'The linguistic and historical value of the Irish law-tracts', *PBA* 29 (1943), pp. 195–227, 'Background of early Irish literature' (above, n. 31); Byrne, *Irish Kings*, pp. 12–15. I am also indebted here to an [even now] unpublished paper by Professor T. M. Charles-Edwards on 'The conversion of the Irish learned professions'.

88   *Alc. Ep.* 124, pp. 182–3, 20, pp. 56–8, 67, pp. 110–11, 233, pp. 378–9; Abbot Cuthberht of Monkwearmouth's letter to Lull, *Br. Bon* 116 pp. 250–2.

89 Conc. Clov. (747) i, viii–ix, xii, xvi, xix–xx, xxviii–ix, *Councils*, pp. 363–75; *Br. Bon.* 78, pp. 170–1 (and for the connection, Levison, *Continent*, p. 86, n. 1). Cf. also *Legatine Council* xix, *Alc. Ep.* 3, p. 27.

90 *Councils*, p. 133; cf. W. Levison, 'Die Akten der römischen Synode von 679', *Aus rheinischer und fränkischer Frühzeit* (Düsseldorf, 1948), pp. 267–94, esp. p. 284; Penit. Theod. I i, *Councils*, pp. 177–8.

91 Ep. Ecgb., pp. 407–18; translation, *EHD* I, pp. 800–7.

92 Conc. Clov. v., *Councils*, p. 364; Dial. Egb. xi, p. 408; S 89, 1411, 1257, 123, 125, 1434; cf. Conc. Chels. (816) viii, *Councils*, pp. 582–3; and, generally, H. Böhmer, 'Das Eigenkirchentum in England', in M. Förster et al. (eds), *Festgabe für F. Liebermann* (Halle, 1921), pp. 334–45.

93 For the relevant passages in *Beowulf*, see above, n. 45: there is no comparable reference in the poem to the consumption of food. Cf. *Tacitus* xxi, xxiii, pp. 48–9.

94 U. Stutz, 'The proprietary church', trans. G. Barraclough, *Medieval Germany: Essays by German Historians* (Oxford, 1938), pp. 35–70. For some interesting archaeological evidence, see Irsigler, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 207–8, 211–13. For Irish evidence, Hughes, *Church*, pp. 160–4; Byrne, *Irish Kings*, p. 258; cf. I. B. Cowan, 'The poet-Columban Church in Scotland', *Records of the Church History Society of Scotland* XVIII (1974), pp. 245–60. For Frankish evidence, F. Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum im Frankenreich* (Munich, 1965), pp. 185–7, 190, 278–9, 502–3.

95 E. Ewig, 'Milo et eiusmodi similes', *Sankt Bonifatius Gedenkgabe* (Fulda, 1954), pp. 412–40; F. Prinz, *Klerus und Krieg im früheren Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 1971), e.g. pp. 104–13; Mayr-Harting, *Coming*, pp. 130–9; J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Rome and the early English church: some problems of transmission', *Sett. Spol.* VII (1960), pp. 540–2 [reprint, *EME*, pp. 128–9]; 'A background to St. Boniface', *England before the Conquest*, pp. 40–2 [reprint, *EME*, pp. 128–9, 142–5].

96 *Ekkehard, Casus Sancti Galli* ix, ed. Pertz (MGH, SS II), pp. 117–18. On the *Waltharius*, see Strecker's introduction to his MGH edition (above, n. 79), and Laistner, *Thought and Letters*, pp. 357–9. On all of this, see Leyser, *art. cit.*, n. 1 above, esp. pp. 30–1 [*Medieval Germany*, pp. 165–7].

97 *Flodoard, Historia Remensis Ecclesiae* iv 5, ed. J. Heller and G. Waitz (MGH, SS XIII), p. 564; for Eormanric, cf. *Beowulf* 1197–1201, *Widsith*, pp. 15–36 (Chambers does not cite the reference from Flodoard).

98 *Rudolf of Fulda, Translatio sancti Alexandri*, ed. G. H. Pertz (MGH, SS II), pp. 673–7; K. Schmid, 'Die Nachfahren Widukinds', *DA* 20 (1964), pp. 1–47, and 'Religiöses und sippengebundenes Gemeinschaftsbewuβtsein in frühmittelalterlichen Gedenkenbucheinträgen', *DA* 21 (1965), pp. 18–81, at pp. 63–4. H. Grundmann, 'Die Frauen und die Literatur im Mittelalter', *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 26 (1936), pp. 219–61, cites (p. 136, n. 17) Charlemagne's 'Duplex Edictum' (789), *Cap.* 23:19, I, p. 63, against the writing and sending of 'winileodas' (apparently love songs) by nuns, and suggests a connection of communities of female religious with composition of vernacular literature; for some reason, he does not support his case with the example of Whitby, where Bede believed that Anglo-Saxon religious poetry originated.

99 K. Bosl, 'Die germanische Kontinuität im deutschen Mittelalter', in his *Frühformen der Gesellschaft im mittelalterlichen Europa* (Munich, 1964), pp. 80–105, at p. 93.

100 Ewig, 'Milo', pp. 430–40, Prinz, *Klerus*, pp. 11–12, 73–104 and *passim*.

101 Schmid, 'Religiöses', p. 69.

102 *Beowulf* 2600–1. For the Minster, M. Deansley, *The Pre-conquest Church in England* (2nd edn, London, 1963), pp. 191–220; C. A. Ralegh Radford, 'Pre-Conquest Minster Churches', *Archaeological Journal* 130 (1973), pp. 126–40 (see also below, chapters 7–8. For the view of Bede's letter to Egbert adopted here, see E. John, *Land Tenure in Early England* (Leicester, 1960), pp. 44–9, 'Folkland reconsidered', *Orbis Britanniae and Other Studies* (Leicester, 1966), pp. 80–91, and '*Saecularium Prioratus* and the Rule of St. Benedict', *Rev. Bn.* 75 (1965), pp. 223–7. It is unnecessary to go into the vexed question of whether Anglo-Saxon kindreds insisted upon hereditary tenure before the coming of the Church, since all scholars agree that bookland was at least open to the claims of heirs afterwards [see now chapters 4 and 7, pp. 153–7, 251–3]; but I share some of the reservations about John's important thesis expressed by D. A. Bullough, 'Anglo-Saxon institutions and the structure of Old English Society', *Annali della fondazione italiana per la storia amministrativa* 2 (1965), p. 652.

103 E. John, 'The king and the monks in the tenth-century reformation', *Orbis Britanniae*, pp. 154–80.

104 *Æthelwulf, De Abbatibus*, ed. A. Campbell (Oxford, 1967), p. xxii. Compare *Alcuini Vita Willibrordi* 1–2, ed. W. Levison (MGH, SRM VII, 1919), pp. 116–17, and *EHD* I, pp. 775–6.

105 For Deerhurst and its enlargement in the pre-Viking period, see H. M. and J. Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture* (2 vols + 1, Cambridge, 1965, 1978), I, pp. 193–209. For the transactions of its patrons, see S 139, 1187, 1433, and the valuable comments of Whitelock, *EHD* I, pp. 512–13, 516–17. The even more celebrated church at Brixworth, Taylor and Taylor I, pp. 108–14, was connected by Sir Frank Stenton, 'Medehamstede and its colonies', *Prep. ASE*, pp. 183–5, to the mother-house at Peterborough, as was the artistically important early foundation at Breedon-on-the-Hill; and the initiative at Breedon was taken by a *princeps* of very considerable wealth, although there is no evidence that subsequent abbots were connected with his family. I do not of course maintain that every major Anglo-Saxon church was dominated by its founding family. [See also on these churches and their connections, chapters 7 and 8 below.]

106 *Vit. Wilf.* xxxix, pp. 231–2; *HE* iii 24, iv 23, iv 26, pp. 179, 254, 267–8; *The Earliest Life of Gregory the Great*, ed. B. Colgrave (Lawrence, Kans., 1968), pp. 35, 39.

107 *Alc. Ep.* 127, p. 188; 'ASC' 798, 796F, p. 182; *Symeon of Durham, Historia Regum*, ed. T. Arnold (RS 75) II, p. 59; *EHD* I, p. 275.

108 *Felix* xx, pp. 84–5; D. P. Kirby, 'Bede's native sources for the *Historia Ecclesiastica*', *BJRL* 48 (1965–6), pp. 341–71, at p. 370; Taylor and Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture* II, pp. 510–16; H. M. Taylor, 'Repton reconsidered', *England before the Conquest*, pp. 351–89 (with especial emphasis on the importance of royal burials for the church's architecture).

109 S 34; Stenton 'Medeshamstede', p. 191 [see now chapter 8, p. 254 n. 19].

110 Levison, *Continent*, pp. 29–33, 249–59.

111 Sisam, *Structure*, p. 50; Whitelock, *Audience*, pp. 58–64. For other illustrations of Mercian treatment of royal *minsters*, see, e.g., S 116–17, 1257.

112 S 1436: this charter, and the conflict underlying it, has been illuminated as never before by Professor Nicholas Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984), chapter 9, which he was kind enough to show me ten years before its publication.

113 For Wilfrid's career, *HE* v 19, pp. 322–30, and II, pp. 315–29.

114 *Vit. Wilf.* xiii, pp. 207–8, xvii, pp. 211–12, lxii, pp. 257–8; Bede, Ep. ad Pleguinam, *Opera de Temporibus*, ed. Jones, p. 315; *William of Malmesbury, Gesta Pontificum*, pp. 338–9; and Whitelock, 'Anglo-Saxon poetry', pp. 89–90. On the interpretation of Wilfrid's career, see Mayr-Harting, *Coming*, chapter 9; and E. John, 'The social and political problems of the early English Church', in J. Thirsk (ed.), *Land, Church and People: Essays Presented to H. P. R. Finberg* (Reading, 1970), pp. 39–63.

115 For Egbert, Ep. Ecgb., p. 412, and II, p. 378; cf. *Alcuin, The Bishops, Kings and Saints of York* lines 1250–2, 1273–5, ed. P. Godden (OMT, Oxford, 1982), pp. 98–101; *Symeon of Durham, Libellus de Exordio . . . Dunhelmensis, Ecclesie* ii 3, ed. D. Rollason (OMT, Oxford, 2000), pp. 82–3. For episcopal casualties, 'ASC' 871, p. 193; for episcopal compensation, Laws Æthelberht 1, and cf. Dial. Egb. xii, *Councils*, pp. 408–9.

116 R. Woolf, 'Doctrinal influences on the Dream of the Rood', *Medium Aevum* 27 (1958), pp. 137–53; J. V. Fleming, '*The Dream of the Rood* and Anglo-Saxon monasticism', *Traditio* 22 (1966), pp. 43–72.

117 K. R. Brooks, *Andreas and the Fates of the Apostles* (Oxford, 1961), pp. xxii–xxvi.

118 C. L. Wrenn, 'The poetry of Caedmon', *PBA* 32 (1946), pp. 277–98, at pp. 284–8; D. H. Green, *The Carolingian Lord* (Cambridge, 1965), pp. 270–401.

119 R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, 'The decoration', in T. Kendrick, T. J. Brown and R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford (eds), *Evangeliorum Quattuor Codex Lindisfarnensis* (2 vols, Lausanne, 1956–60), II, pp. 109–260, esp. pp. 250–8; cf. Bruce-Mitford, 'Reception by the Anglo-Saxons of Mediterranean Art', *Sett. Spol.* XIV (1967), pp. 797–825; and D. Wilson, in Farrell (ed.), *Bede*, pp. 1–22.

120 *Br. Bon.* 35, p. 60.

121 Whitelock, *Audience*, pp. 80–2; Mayr-Harting, *Coming*, pp. 230–9.

122 *Felix* xxiv–v, xxxi, xxxiv, xxxvi, pp. 86–9, 100–7, 108–11, 114–17; Athanasius' 'Life of Anthony' 7–10, ed. R. J. Deferrari, *Early Christian Biographies* (Fathers of the Church 15, Washington, DC (1952), pp. 142–5.

123 *Felix* xl, xlix, li–ii, pp. 124–7, 148–51, 160–7. For *Adelsheilige*, see Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, 496–503, *Klerus*, pp. 58–62, and 'Heiligenkult und Adelsherrschaft im Spiegel merowingischer Hagiographie', *Historische Zeitschrift* 204 (1967), pp. 529–44; K. Bosl, 'Der *Adelsheiliger*', in C. Bauer, L. Böhm and M. Müller (eds), *Speculum Historiale. Geschichte im Spiegel von Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsdeutung (Festschrift Johannes Spörl)* (Munich, 1965), pp. 167–87. For a rather different approach, F. Graus, *Volk, Herrscher und Heiliger im Reich der Merowinger* (Prague, 1965).

124 De Vries, *Altgermanische Religionsgeschichte* II, pp. 99–100, 105, 153; F. M. Stenton, 'Anglo-Saxon heathenism', *Prep. ASE*, p. 295 [see now Additional Note, pp. 103–105].

125 *The Oldest English Texts*, ed. H. Sweet (EETS 83, London, 1885), pp. 169–71; 'Nennius', Historia Brittonum, ed. T. Mommsen (MGH, AA XIII, Berlin, 1894), pp. 202–5; *Beowulf* 4, 18, 53, 901, 1068–94, etc., 1201, 1709, 1949, 1960–2, *Widsith* 14, 18, 88, 27, 35–44; K. Sisam, 'Anglo-Saxon royal genealogies', *PBA* 39 (1953),

pp. 287–346; J. Goody and I. Watt, 'Consequences of literacy', in Goody (ed.), *Literacy*, pp. 31–4; Vansina, *Oral Tradition*, p. 153. For the East Anglian genealogy in full, see Bruce-Mitford, *Sutton Hoo*, pp. 54, 81–2 (and cf. B. Green, 'An Anglo-Saxon bone plaque from Larling Norfolk', *Antiquaries' Journal* 51 (1971), pp. 321–3); for the West Saxon, 'ASC' 855, pp. 189–90. For a revised date and provenance of the genealogy collection, see now D. Dumville, 'The Anglian collection of royal genealogies and regnal lists', *ASE* 5 (1976), pp. 23–50.

126   *Alc. Ep.* 129, p. 192; on all of this, cf. M. C. W. Hunter, 'Germanic and Roman antiquity and the sense of the past in Anglo-Saxon England', *ASE* 3 (1974), pp. 29–50, which the author kindly showed me before publication, when my own paper was still germinating.

127   Stanley, '*Haethenra Hyht*', p. 136. In his '*Beowulf*', in Stanley (ed.), *Continuations and Beginnings* (London, 1966), pp. 139–40, Professor Stanley comes close to the view I adopt in this paper.

128   *Gregory of Tours, Libri Historiarum*, ed. B. Krusch and W. Levison (MGH, SRM I, 2nd edn, Hannover, 1951). For discussion of Gregory, see J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'The work of Gregory of Tours in the light of modern research', *The Long-Haired Kings* (London, 1962), pp. 49–70, and 'Gregory of Tours and Bede', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 2 (1968), pp. 31–44, reprinted in *EMH*, pp. 96–114; for further discussion of the contrast with Bede, Campbell, 'Bede I', pp. 172, 176–9, 'Bede II', p. xv (pp. 15, 19, 22, 34–5). See also R. A. Markus, *Bede and the Tradition of Ecclesiastical History* (Jarrow Lecture, 1975).

129   *Paul the Deacon, Historia Langobardorum* i 7–9, ed. G. Waitz (MGH, SR. Lang., 1878), pp. 52–3; cf. 'Origo Gentis Langobardorum', ibid., pp. 2–3. There is no major modern study of Paul, but see E. Sestan, 'La Storiografia dell'Italia longobarda: Paolo Diacono', *Sett. Spol.* XVII (1970), pp. 357–86.

130   *Widukindi Res Gestae Saxonicae* iii–xv, ed. G. Waitz, P. Hirsch and P. Lohmann (MGH, SRG 60, 1935), pp. 4–25; cf. K. Hauck, *Goldbrakteaten aus Sievern* (Munich, 1970), esp. pp. 43–112. On Widukind see, above all, H. Beumann, *Widukind von Korvei* (Weimar, 1950), and Beumann, 'Historiographische Konzeption und politische Ziele Widukinds von Korvey', *Sett. Spol.* XVII (1970), pp. 857–94.

131   Chambers, 'Bede', *PBA* 22 (1935), pp. 132, 137–8.

132   Attention should also be drawn here to the sea-beast saga with which Fredegar amplifies Gregory's account of the pagan past of the Franks, *Fredegar, Chronicon* iii 9, ed. B. Krusch (MGH, SRM II, 1888) II, p. 95, and cf. J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Fredegar and the history of France', *Long-Haired Kings*, p. 84. It should be emphasized that both the Franks and the Saxons envisaged an originally Mediterranean origin for their peoples (Trojan and Macedonian respectively). Like the East Anglians', their past had to do with more than primeval German forests: cf. Leyser, pp. 29–30 [pp. 165–6].

133   *HE* i 15, 34, pp. 30–3, 71–2.

134   'Bede, *De Schematibus et Tropis*', ed. G. H. Tanenhaus, *Quarterly Jnl Speech* 48 (1962), pp. 237–53; cf. E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (trans. W. R. Trask) (New York, 1953), pp. 46–7; Hunter Blair, *World of Bede*, pp. 282–97, and 'From Bede to Alcuin', *Famulus Christi*, pp. 239–60.

135   *Bede, Expos. in Act.* 17.23, ed. Laistner (1983), p. 71, observes that God was known in Judaea and rejected, and unknown in Achaea though sought. He comments that he who does not know God is himself ignored, and he who is obstinate is punished, that neither is immune from blame, but that those who never received the faith are *excusabiliores* than those who laid hands on the Christ they did know. For Augustine's treatment of the noble pagans of Rome, see Brown, *Augustine*, pp. 299–312.

136   *Bede Explanatio Apocalypsis*, ed. R. Gryson (CCSL CXXIA, 2001) Pr. 140, p. 233; *Expos. in Act.* Pr., Ep. ad Accam, p. 1; *HE* v 23, pp. 349–51 (note especially the *two* comets, the advance of the Arabs, the chaos of Ceolwulf's reign and the proliferation of monasticism, for which cf. *Ep. Ecgb.* as n. 91); Mayr-Harting, *Coming*, pp. 216–19, has brilliantly captured the urgent note in Bede's life's work. For a rather different view, see Bonner, 'Bede and medieval civilization', p. 84.

137   Campbell, 'Bede II', pp. xiv–xvi [pp. 34–5]. For classical influences upon Paul and Widukind, see Sestan, pp. 359–62; and Beumann, *Widukind*, pp. 18–21 and 'Historiographische Konzeption', pp. 872–3.

138   For Bede on Gildas, *HE* i 22, p. 42 (cf. iii 17, p. 161); for his use of Gildas, Hanning, *Vision of History*, pp. 44–90, and Wallace-Hadrill, *Early Germanic Kingship*, pp. 74–6. For the uncensured bishop, *HE* iii 7, p. 141, and for the principle of not criticizing priests, *Bede, In Sam.* II xv 30–1, IV xxvi 8–9, pp. 135, 244–5; cf. Carroll, *Bede's Spiritual Teachings*, pp. 150–2, and Campbell, 'Bede I', p. 177 (pp. 19–20). For Aidan, *HE* iii 5, p. 136; and for the use of example, *HE* Pr., p. 5.

139   *Grégoire, Dialogues*, ed. A. de Vogüé (3 vols, SC 254, Paris, 1978–80), I, pp. 16–17 (trans. O. J. Zimmermann, Fathers of the Church 39, Washington, DC, 1959, p. 6); *Liber Regulae Pastoralis*, ed. B. Judic et al. (2 vols, SC, 381, Paris, 1992), i 2, pp. 134–7 (trans. J. Barmby, Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers XII(2), p. 2); cf. also ii 3, iii 6, pp. 180–7, 284–7; and A. de Vogüé, '*Sub regula vel abbate*', *Collectanea Cisterciana* 33 (1971), pp. 209–41.

140   Campbell, 'Bede I', p. 182 [p. 25].

141   *HE* v 24, p. 357; Bede, Homily i 13, *Opera Homiletica*, p. 93; cf. *Vit. Wilf* ii, pp. 194–5; *Felix* xviii–xix, pp. 80–3; *Anon., Vita Cuthberti* i 7, p. 73.

142   *Hist. Lang.* iv 37, pp. 131–2, cf. ii 9, pp. 77–8, and Waitz's introduction, p. 15; cf. also Sestan, pp. 360–1, 374–5; for Widukind, Beumann, *Widukind*, pp. 2–3, 22–4, and 'Historiographische Konzeption', pp. 870–2; for Gregory, *Lib. Hist.*, p. x.

143   'Bede and Benedict Biscop', above, p. 12 and n. 80; cf. also above, n. 123, and Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum*, pp. 457–64. It should be noted that the independent 'Vita Ceolfridi' (VC), pp. 388–404, shares the same tone as Bede's HA, which confirms that this tone is a function of community traditions, and not an idiosyncrasy of Bede's. Bede's *Life of Cuthbert* is very different, but here Bede was following an earlier life, and the additions that he makes have nothing to do with *Adelsheiliger* norms: cf. C. G. Loomis, 'The miracle tradition of the Venerable Bede', *Speculum* 21 (1946), pp. 404–18.

144   HA 11, 16, pp. 375–6, 381; VC 16, 25, pp. 393–4, 396; cf. *Vit. Wilf.* 62–3, pp. 258–9, *HE* iv 16, p. 237.

145   E. A. Lowe, *English Uncial* (Oxford, 1961); R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, 'The art of the *Codex Amiatinus*', *Jnl British Archaeological Association* XXXII (1969), pp. 1–25; C. Nordenfalk, 'Before the Book of Durrow', *Acta Archaeologica* 18 (1947), pp. 159–66;

cf. above, n. 119; also R. W. Southern, 'Bede', *Medieval Humanism and other Studies* (London, 1970), p. 2.

146 VC 8, pp. 390–1.

147 See n. 20 above. This is not to deny that Bede does, on occasion, reflect the values of Germanic society: *HE* i 34, ii 9, iii 14, iv 15, 21, pp. 71–2, 99, 155, 236, 249; what remains surprising nevertheless, especially by comparison with continental writers, is not the existence of evidence that Bede was a seventh-century barbarian, but its paucity.

148 Wallace-Hadrill, 'Work of Gregory of Tours', pp. 54–5, emphasizes the hagiographical training from which Gregory proceeded to history. Cassiodorus became one of the most important minor fathers after his (lost) history of the Goths was written, and apparently it was almost entirely secular and political in motivation: cf. A. Momigliano, 'Cassiodorus and the Italian culture of his time', *Studies in Historiography* (1966), pp. 181–210; see also *Isidore of Seville's Historia Gothorum*, ed. T. Mommsen (MGH, AA XI, Berlin, 1893), with J. Messmer, *Hispaniaidee und Gotenmythos* (Zurich, 1960), pp. 85–137, and J. N. Hillgarth, 'Historiography in Visigothic Spain', *Sett. Spol.* XVII (1970), pp. 295–9.

149 Campbell, 'First Century', pp. 20–9 (pp. 57–67).

150 For the blood-feud, see Whitelock, *Audience*, pp. 13–19; and the important article by J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'The blood-feud of the Franks', *Long-Haired Kings*, pp. 121–47. For the popularity of the Apocrypha, see R. E. Kaske, 'Beowulf and the Book of Enoch', *Speculum* 46 (1971), pp. 421–31, and Ogilvy, *Books Known to the English*, pp. 66–74 [also F. M. Biggs et al. (eds), *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture: A Trial Version* (Centre for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, Binghamton, NY, 1990), pp. 22–48].

151 For the *Wessobrunner Gebet* and the *Muspilli*, see *Die kleineren althochdeutschen Sprachdenkmäler*, ed. E. von Steinmayer (Berlin, 1916), pp. 16–19, 66–81, and cf. Ker, *Dark Ages*, pp. 240–1. For the *Altus Prosator*, *The Irish Liber Hymnorum*, ed. J. H. Bernard and R. Atkinson (2 vols, Henry Bradshaw Society XIV, London, 1898), I, pp. 62–83, II, p. 146; Goldsmith, *Mode*, pp. 42–7, intelligently draws attention to the imaginative overlap between this poem and *Beowulf*. For Beowulf and the Arians, J. Halverson, 'Pitfalls of piety' (above, n. 43), p. 275; but the difference between the Gothic and insular terminology of Godhead is a crucial argument against Arian influence: Green, *Carolingian Lord*, pp. 233–321, and W. Baetke, *Das Heilige im Germanischen* (Tübingen, 1942), pp. 213–16, 220–6. For the appeal of Arianism, see E. A. Thompson, *The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila* (Oxford, 1966), pp. 107–10.

152 K. Hughes, *Early Christian Ireland: An Introduction to the Sources* (London, 1972), pp. 170–1.

153 W. A. Chaney, 'Paganism to Christianity in Anglo-Saxon England', *Harvard Theological Review* 53 (1960), p. 200; but cf. Kuhn, 'Das Fortleben' (above, n. 38), p. 743: 'besonders irreführend ist es das Ethische in den Begriff der Religionen aufzunehmen'. Stanley, 'Quest' (above, n. 42) is an entertaining critique of the paganizers of early English literature.

154 Conc. Clov. iii, *Councils*, pp. 363–4; cf. Stenton, 'Anglo-Saxon Heathenism', pp. 281–97; Mayr-Harting, *Coming*, pp. 22–30.

155 Vansina, *Oral Tradition*, p. 96. For a strikingly similar determination of the later Roman aristocracy not to accept the Augustinian dismissal of the legends of the Republic, or to abandon Vergil and Livy, though willing to accept baptism and patronize Prudentius, cf. Momigliano, 'Cassiodorus', pp. 185–6, and Brown, 'The conversion' (above, n.1), p. 10 (*Religion and Society*, pp. 178–9).

156 For the euhemerization of Woden, see the letter of Bishop Daniel to Boniface, *Br. Bon.* 23, pp. 38–41; and the *Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. A. Campbell (London, 1962), pp. 7, 9. For genealogies see above, pp. 50, 57, and Appendix, pp. 72–3.

157 K. Hauck, 'Lebensnormen und Kultmythen in germanischen Stammes- und Herrschergenealogien', *Saeculum* 6 (1955), pp. 204–5: Professor Hauck misses the case of the West Saxons, but cf. Ker, *Catalogue*, nos 39, 180. [I consider the significance of this point in *MEL*, pp. 163–81, and my articles there cited.] Note also the association between codification of poetry and laws in *Einhard, Life of Charlemagne* (above, n. 62) [and the Additional Note below].

158 W. P. Ker, *Epic and Romance*, pp. 54–7; Chadwick, *Heroic Age*, pp. 30–40, 329–32.

159 John, 'Social and political problems' (above, n. 114) is good on the limitations of this view.

160 Ker, *Epic and Romance*, pp. 45–7.

161 Bruce-Mitford, *Cod. Lind.* II, pp. 126–73; Plummer II, p. 309; cf. Mayr-Harting, *Coming*, pp. 192–204.

NOTES TO THE APPENDIX

1 C. Chase (ed.), *The Dating of Beowulf* (Toronto, 1981) – henceforth *Dating* – is of course the central forum of debate. Otherwise, as in Additional Note, I here cite only recent works on the poem which appear to me to bear substantially on the dating question; and I apologize herewith to commentators who feel their contribution to be unwarrantably neglected. This is also the right place to acknowledge the stimulus of Professor Eric Stanley's (in part) differing ideas; his relentless questioning has kept my eye, like that of all students of the subject, firmly on the ball; and to his friendship, as to that of Professor Roberta Frank, I owe many hours of enlightenment and entertainment on this and other aspects of Old English studies.

2 W. Goffart, '*Hetware* and *Hugas*: Datable anachronisms in *Beowulf*', *Dating*, pp. 83–100; this, together with R. Frank, 'Skaldic Verse and the Date of *Beowulf*', pp. 123–39 (but deferring till n. 7 Professor Murray's paper), are the only papers in this collection which, if endorsed, would mean that *Beowulf has* to be late, rather than *may* not be early (and Professor Goffart may perhaps permit me to recall an off-the-record discussion in which he expressed more confidence in the *Hetware* than in the *Hugas* 'anachronism', i.e. a post-750 rather than post-900 date for the poem). The major contributions still sticking to an earlier date, on grounds of palaeography, onomastic orthography or metre, etc., are R. D. Fulk, 'Dating *Beowulf* to the Viking Age', *PQ* 61 (1982), pp. 341–59 (review of *Dating*), S. Newton, *The Origins of Beowulf and the Pre-Viking Kingdom of East Anglia* (Cambridge, 1993), and now M. Lapidge, 'The archetype of *Beowulf*', *ASE* 29 (2000), pp. 5–41. R. Frank, '*Beowulf* and Sutton Hoo: The Odd Couple', in C. B. Kendall and P. S. Wells,

Voyage to the Other World: The Legacy of Sutton Hoo (Medieval Studies at Minnesota 5, Minneapolis, 1992), pp. 47–64, is the main critique of *Beowulf*–Sutton Hoo linkage; but again, seems to me to make a stronger case against their automatic association than in favour of dissociation.

3   E. G. Stanley, 'The Date of *Beowulf*: Some Doubts and no Conclusions', *Dating*, pp. 197–211; J. W. Earl, *Thinking About Beowulf* (Stanford, Calif., 1994), pp. 16–17; cf. also below, n. 23.

4   A. Bonjour, *The Digressions in Beowulf* (Medium Ævum Monographs V, Oxford, 1950).

5   A. Orchard, *Pride and Prodigies: Studies in the Monsters of the Beowulf-Manuscript* (Cambridge, 1995). A near definitive discussion of the manuscript's date is D. N. Dumville, 'Beowulf come lately', *Archiv für das Studium d. neueren Sprache u. Literatur* 225 (1988), pp. 49–63.

6   M. Winterbottom, 'The Style of Æthelweard', *Medium Ævum* XXXVI (1967), pp. 109–18; see now S. Ashley, 'Ealdorman Æthelweard and the Politics of History', in P. Wormald (ed.), *The Lay Intellectual in the Carolingian Era* (forthcoming).

7   *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. A. Campbell (Edinburgh, 1962), i 3, p. 7. For Æthelweard's relevance, A. C. Murray, '*Beowulf*, the Danish Invasions, and Royal Genealogy', *Dating*, pp. 101–11; A. L. Meaney, 'Scyld Scefing and the Dating of *Beowulf* – Again', *BJRL* 71 (1989), pp. 7–40. Cf. F. Robinson, *The Tomb of Beowulf* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 13–14. I take it that Professors Robinson and Goffart would wish to note a fairly close parallel that has hitherto eluded even their learning: our hero's obsequies are strikingly like those of Emperor Augustus (himself of course deified), as described by *Cassius Dio, Roman History*, ed. H. B. Foster and E. Cary (Loeb series, 1981), lvi 42, VII, pp. 96–9.

8   *Chronicle of Æthelweard,* i 4, p. 9; R. Flower, 'The Script of the Exeter Book', in R. W. Chambers et al. (eds), *The Exeter Book of Old English Poetry* (London, 1933), pp. 83–94; J. Hill (ed.), 'Widsith and the Tenth Century', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 85 (1984), pp. 305–15; also her edition, *Old English Minor Heroic Poems* (Durham and St Andrews Medieval Texts 4, Durham, 1983), pp. 7–9.

9   Stanley, 'Date of *Beowulf* ', pp. 197, 201–2, 210. That Ælfric strongly disapproved of materials which circulated in monastic contexts notwithstanding is demonstrated by R. Jayatilaka, 'The *Regula Sancti Benedicti* in Late Anglo-Saxon England: The Manuscripts and their Readers' (D. Phil., Oxford, 1996), pp. 321–31.

10   S. Keynes, *An Atlas of Attestations in Anglo-Saxon Charters c. 660–1066* (Dept of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, Cambridge, 2002): the foundation of *PASE, The Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England*, a major new AHRB research project, directed by himself, J. L. Nelson and S. Baxter. (See also next three notes.)

11   W. G. Searle, *Onomasticon Anglo-Saxonicum* (Cambridge, 1897) remains impressively comprehensive, its main defect a lack of discrimination hardly avoidable at that date. A good Anglophone introduction to the methods of the 'Münster School' and its problems is S. Airlie, 'The aristocracy', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History. II. c.700–c.900* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 431–50, at pp. 437–9.

12   *The Vita Wulfstani of William of Malmesbury*, ed. R. R. Darlington (Camden Soc. XL, 1978), i 1, p. 4; *Felix's Life of Saint Guthlac* (Cambridge, 1956), x, pp. 76–9; F. Robinson, 'The Significance of Names in Old English Literature', *Anglia* 86 (1968),

pp. 14–58, reprinted, *Tomb of Beowulf*, pp. 185–218 (at pp. 206–17). I owe to Simon Keynes (personal comment) further instances of self-conscious Old English naming.

13   Now conveniently accessed in J. Gerchow, *Die Gedenküberlieferung der Angelsachsen* (Arbeiten zur Frühmittelalterforschung, Munster, 20, Berlin, 1988).

14   D. Dumville, 'Between Alfred the Great and Edgar the Peacemaker: Æthelstan, first King of England', in his *Wessex and England from Alfred to Edgar* (Studies in Anglo-Saxon History III, Woodbridge, 1992), pp. 141–71, at pp. 151–3.

15   Frank, 'Skaldic Verse', e.g. pp. 129–30.

16   '**Biuulf**': Gerchow A MONA 69, p. 316; '**Hyglac**': Gerchow A PBRR 193, A CLER 61, 482, 741, pp. 308–9, 311, 313, *Æthelwulf, De Abbatibus*, ed. A. Campbell (Oxford, 1967), xvi 507–26; **Ingeld**: 'ASC' 718, S 58.

17   Gerchow A ABBA 23, p. 306 (*Æthelwulf* iii–viii 52–207, xii 395–402), DIAC 7, CLER 507–8, 801, 926, MONA 487, pp. 309, 312–14, 318, Keynes, *Atlas* V(1), XV(2), XVI(1), XXI(11–12).

18   *Eccl. Hist.* iv 25, pp. 426–7, Gerchow A CLER 421, p. 311, S 270a.

19   **Freoðoric**: S 1803, 1805 (Stenton 'Medehamstede', pp. 181–2, cf. S 1164, and J. Blair, 'Frithuwold's kingdom and the origins of Surrey', in S. Bassett (ed.), *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms* (Leicester, 1989), pp. 97–107, at pp. 105–6, Keynes, *Atlas* XX(1), XXI(10) (note the other 'Freoðor-' names in these lists); **Hama**: S 1437; **Heremod**: Keynes, *Atlas* XXI(12), XXIII(1 b) XXV(2).

20   **Hagen**: S 233, 1171, 1246; **Waldhere**: S 65, 65a, 1428b, 1784–5; **Ætla**: *Eccl. Hist.* iv 23, pp. 408–9 (it is perhaps worth noting how nearly we knew nothing of this altogether interesting figure).

21   *Eccl. Hist.* v 19, pp. 516–17, S 1503, *Chronicle of Æthelweard* ii 19, p. 24, etc. Ecglaf, the fourth such name, may be a Scandinavian 'reinforcement'.

22   *Felix's Life of Guthlac* xviii, pp. 80–3; Tolkien, '*Beowulf* ', p. 77.

23   R. E. Björk and A. Obermeier, 'Date, Provenance, Author, Audiences', in R. E. Björk and J. D. Niles (eds), *A Beowulf Handbook* (Exeter, 1996), pp. 13–34, at pp. 21–2; this, be it noted, was just the view of the poem taken by Tolkien (e.g. pp. 69–74), which directly influenced my approach above.

24   Chadwick, *Heroic Age*, pp. 64–6, 390–2, and especially 'Causes and Antecedent Conditions', pp. 458–63 (where one may surely detect the – unacknowledged – influence of Max Weber?).

Additional Note

This note addresses works on this paper's topics over the last thirty years, other than those reviewed in the Appendix on the date of *Beowulf*. It is subdivided in terms of two of the four elements in its title, 1. *Beowulf* 2. Conversion. Work on Bede was covered in the introductory chapter; and to the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy, I shall have to return at requisite length elsewhere. (For the record, the original's Appendix A, though too outdated to reproduce here, still reflects the essentials of my view; the main development in the English as opposed to continental approaches (for which cf. Airlie, as above, p. 99, n. 11) is that R. Faith, *The English Peasantry and the Growth of Lordship* (Leicester, 1997) gives the first full account since Stenton of how an early warrior aristocracy would have been supported 'at home'.)

1 (a) For the reason given at the outset of the Appendix, I here make no attempt whatever to reckon with *Beowulf*'s ever-burgeoning bibliography, confining myself to work bearing directly on my original paper's central themes. Pride of place among these goes to *Beowulf: An Edition*, ed. B. Mitchell and F. Robinson (Oxford, 1998). Aimed at 'those reading the poem for the first time' (to be entitled 'A Student Edition' till that title was pre-empted), this gives comprehensive non-technical accounts of most relevant issues, from text and language to historical and archaeological context (the latter supplied by Dr Leslie Webster). It does not, however, come equipped with a translation, for which S. Heaney, *Beowulf* (London, 1999, also available as an Audiobook, read by himself) is itself poetry by a great poet; yet I still regard David Wright's one-time Penguin Classics translation (1957) as the best approximation in prose. Bruce Mitchell and Fred Robinson, who remain two of the leading authorities, conclude their introduction with their personal views of the poem. Dr Mitchell expounded his at length (as I should have noted in my original paper) in '"Until the dragon comes...": some thoughts on *Beowulf*', *Neophilologus* 47 (1963), pp. 126–38, and in his 'Introduction' to K. Crossley-Holland, *Beowulf* (London, 1973), each reprinted in his *On Old English* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 3–15, 24–9. Professor Robinson expands on his own in Part I of his *Tomb of Beowulf* ('Appendix', n. 7), especially his own 'Introduction', pp. 52–67, from M. Osborn, *'Beowulf': A Verse Translation with Treasures of the Ancient North* (Berkeley, Calif., 1983), pp. xi–xix. If for no other reason than to put on record this historian's response, I should say that my first reading of the poem was nearer Robinson's than Mitchell's: I read it as an evocation of bygone greatness by one who both knew and lamented its limits.

(b) Professor Peter Clemoes, another *yldesta*, whose *Interactions of Thought and Language in Old English Poetry* (CSASE 12, 1995) was, sadly, valedictory, covers 'The poetry of an aristocratic warrior society' in its Part I, and chapter 1, 'The chronological implications of the bond between kingship in *Beowulf* and kingship in practice', pp. 3–67, makes a striking case, pp. 58–65, for a connection between the poet's world and that of the 'Repton Stone' (M. Biddle and B. Kjølbe-Biddle, 'The Repton Stone', *ASE* 14 (1985), pp. 233–92); but I should not regard this as precluding a rather later date for composition of the poem itself. Other notable critical readings of the poet's religious position are those of E. B. Irving, *Re-reading Beowulf* (Philadelphia, 1989), and Earl's *Thinking About 'Beowulf'* (as Appendix, n. 3). Two longer books making original suggestions about the circumstances of the poem's composition are J. Opland, *Anglo-Saxon Oral Poetry: A Study of the Traditions* (New Haven, 1980), and J. D. Niles, *Beowulf: The Poem and Its Tradition* (Cambridge, Mass., 1983) – cf. the latter's 'Locating *Beowulf* in Literary History', *Exemplaria* 5 (1993), pp. 79–109 – but again I give reasons in the above Appendix for dissenting from some conclusions they draw on dating. R. D. Fulk (ed.), *Interpretations of Beowulf: A Critical Anthology* (Bloomington, Ind., 1991) is a useful collection of older views, and Björk and Niles, *Beowulf Handbook* (as Appendix, n. 23) a stimulating set of newer ones – especially pertinent here being Irving, 'Christian and Pagan Elements', pp. 175–92, Niles, 'Myth and History', pp. 213–32, and C. M. Hills, '*Beowulf* and Archaeology', pp. 291–310.

(c) S. S. Evans, *Lords of Battle: Image and Reality of the Comitatus in Dark-Age Britain* (Woodbridge, 1997) does not take the subject a lot further than Chadwick, apart from (rightly) incorporating equivalent Celtic literature. Meanwhile, Professors Frank and

Goffart and their disciples have repeatedly challenged Chadwick's notion of a historical 'Heroic Age', pre-dating the Carolingian and ultimately incompatible with it: e.g. Frank's 'Germanic Legend in Old English Literature', in M. Godden and M. Lapidge, *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 88–106 (though she seemed less sure when initially reacting to my paper, 'The *Beowulf* Poet's Sense of History', in L. D. Benson and S. Wenzel (eds), *The Wisdom of Poetry: Essays in Early English Literature in Honor of Morton W. Bloomfield* (Kalamazoo, Mich., 1982), pp. 53–65; cf. also K. O'Brien O'Keefe, 'Heroic Values and Christian Ethics', *Cambridge Companion*, pp. 107–25, esp. pp. 112–13. M. Innes, 'Teutons or Trojans: the Carolingians and the Germanic Past', in Y. Hen and M. Innes, *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 227–49, takes the trend to the point of denying, pp. 237–40, much more than literary and 'neo-classical' significance to Einhard's account of Charlemagne's codification (the *mot juste* for 'scripsit memoriaeque mandavit', *Einhard, Vita Karoli*, p. 33) of 'barbara et antiquissima carmina'. Matthew Innes' views on Carolingian culture and society always deserve assiduous attention, but this seems to me to epitomize the lengths to which our generation of scholars will go to deny the reality of a generically Germanic warrior culture: while Einhard *could* have taken 'antiqua' (albeit in the superlative) and 'memoriae' from Tacitus (but what other words was he to use?), 'barbara' is another matter; like Archbishop Fulk's 'libris teutonicis' (above, p. 52), and the *Poeta Saxo*'s 'vulgar (!) songs' (Innes, p. 240), it is more than likely to refer to vernacular writings (Innes, n. 12); and while the *Germania* was, to be sure, in Fulda's library (?like Suetonius, Innes, 'The Classical Tradition in the Carolingian Renaissance: Ninth-Century Encounters with Suetonius', *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 3 (1997), pp. 265–82), so too, anyway before long, was the *Hildebrandslied* (above, pp. 46, 49, 52, 66, Innes, p. 241), and I see no reason to prefer one to the other as the sort of thing Einhard had in mind. Since, as Dr Innes says, Thegan's account of Louis the Pious' manner and taste is self-consciously a *riposte* to Einhard's of Charles (Innes, '"He never even allowed his white teeth to be bared in laughter": the politics of humour in the Carolingian renaissance', in G. Halsall (ed.), *Humour, History and Politics in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 131–56), it is hard to see what else the 'carmina gentilia' learned in Louis' youth and repudiated in his maturity can have been: it was, after all, of 'carmina gentilium' that Alcuin wrote, beside 'Ingeld'. To this extent, I emphatically agree with M. Richter, *The Formation of the Medieval West: Studies in the Oral Culture of the Barbarians* (Dublin, 1994), pp. 128–38. Accordingly, I still regard such passages as evidence that 'heroic' material did circulate in the barbarian West, and their very fragmentary survival as evidence that they were unacceptable in principle to the 'Reformist' conscience. Indeed, Dr Innes' 'Politics of Humour' amounts to an admirable restatement of just that case – despite its n. 43, whose force I cannot quite see. (d) All of which said, however, section 1 of this note should conclude with one respect in which I was certainly wrong. Like everyone else, I followed the Jaffé-Dümmler identification of the 'Speratus' to whom Alcuin addressed his 'Ingeld' letter as Bishop Hygebald of Lindisfarne. Donald Bullough, a much-missed friend and teacher, showed in 'What has Ingeld to do with Lindisfarne?', *ASE* 22 (1993), pp. 93–125, that he cannot be Hygebald but (more than probably) Bishop Unwona of Leicester (785×801) – 'Speratus' being a witty Alcuinian play on names, inasmuch as the literal meaning of the bishop's name

would be 'not wanting' (i.e. hope fulfilled, whence Latin past participle), with merely coincidental similarity, alas, to the Unwen of *Widsith* 114, pp. 114–15, and n. 72. Likewise, '*in sacerdotali convivio*' should be translated 'at the episcopal dinner-table', not 'at the priestly repast', p. 124; indeed, Professor Bullough's version, the work of the greatest Alcuin scholar of the century, should now be preferred in full (even if this particular disciple doesn't quite see why I should translate '*perditus*' 'forgotten' rather than 'lost'). I return to the cultivation of the heroic (conceivably even *Beowulf*) in the eighth/ninth-century diocese of Leicester in chapter 8.

2 (a) Studies of the conversion of the English and their neighbours have followed the same trajectory as perceptions of 'Germanic' culture in general: if barbarians contributed little of their own tradition to the post-Roman cultural stew, their pre-Christian beliefs can hardly have had much substance either. An eminent historian has been heard to call early medieval conversion a 'purely literary episode', seemingly unaware that he thus reduced the proposition to all its absurdity. The most learned rebuttals of the depth of pagan convictions among Germanic speakers before and during their encounter with Romano-Christian civilization were the work of the late and much-lamented Dr Chris Fell, writing from the viewpoint of an expert in Old Norse literature, the materials from which traditional accounts of Germanic paganism were constructed – see, e.g., 'Gods and Heroes of the Northern World', in D. M. Wilson (ed.), *The Northern World* (London, 1980), pp. 33–46; yet it has a symbolic force that, just four years after it was published, a hitherto unknown charter of King Edgar (S 712a, dated 963) brought to light the first case of a place-name demonstrably featuring the goddess Frig (who gave her name to Friday): N. Brooks et al., 'A New Charter of King Edgar', *ASE* 13 (1984), pp. 137–55, at pp. 150–1 (cf. Fell, 'Gods and Heroes', pp. 38–9). D. Wilson (no relation), *Anglo-Saxon Paganism* (London, 1992) does what he can with the rapidly evaporating English evidence, but the most important recent discussion is J. Blair, 'Anglo-Saxon Pagan Shrines and their Prototypes', *ASSAH* 8 (1995), pp. 1–28, making the arresting suggestion, amidst others (e.g. idols in something of the form of 'totem-poles', pp. 2–3, leaving outsize postholes in square enclosures, often with an ancient past, pp. 13, 16), that paganism may have been *gaining* strength in its last years, for instance, building roofed 'temples' in conscious emulation of its Christian rival: this providing the context of Rædwald's notorious structure (*Eccl. Hist.* ii 15, pp. 188–91) – though we may note that Bede's report might equally suggest that the king built what he regarded as a church, which he thoughtfully then equipped with a pagan altar ('*arula*', a *little* one), whence Bede's Samaritan parallel, and whence its still standing at least a generation later. In other words, the faith the missionaries confronted may have derived extra force from taking over a 'haunted landscape'; for a suggestion along the same lines about the interaction of Romano-Celtic and Germanic beliefs among the Franks, cf. J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Frankish Church* (Oxford History of the Christian Church, Oxford, 1983), pp. 17–23 (noting his comments on Rædwald's policy, *Eccl. Hist. Comm.*, pp. 75–7). It should also be noted in this connection that Professor Mayr-Harting has (at least) twice returned to the topics of his fine *Coming*: 'St Wilfrid in Sussex', in M. J. Kitch (ed.), *Studies in Sussex Church History* (Chichester, 1981), pp. 1–17; and *Two Conversions to Christianity: the Bulgarians and the Anglo-Saxons* (Stenton Lecture 27 (1993), Reading, 1994).

(b) Meanwhile, R. North, *Heathen Gods in Old English Literature* (CSASE 22, Cambridge,

1997) returns to what might be called Germanist first principles in making a strong case, from genealogical as well as literary evidence, for an established Anglo-Saxon fertility cult, centred on Ingui, as already identified by Tacitus, *Germania* 40, pp. 57–8. To refute him one would need to know the material as well as he, as I do not, and at the time of publication I have yet to see an expert rebuttal. But it is important that, on one central contention, the non-existence of a pagan priesthood, he is powerfully confuted in an as yet unpublished paper by Professor James Campbell on 'Seventh-century Beliefs', its import to reinforce the impression of a formidably well-established pagan cult in 597. If this is right, it makes the virtual disappearance of pre-Christian belief in principle and practice all the more striking. A possibility at which Campbell more than hints is that the familiar Gregorian policy of converting pagan shrines into churches and a pagan into the Christian calendar may have extended to a yet more influential development: the assumption by pagan priestly dynasties of the status of clergy, and transfer of the lands of pagan shrines to those of minsters under related leadership (which is, after all, what happened at Armagh; see Additional Note to chapter 6 below; this casts interesting light, to say no more, on the presence of a Biscop and a Beda in successive generations of the genealogy of the 'Lindfearna' (usually taken as that of the kingdom of Lindsey, Dumville, 'Anglian Collection', p. 31, though the 'theory, by which the people of Lindisfarne were so named because of their association with Lindsey is . . . as certain as anything in place-name studies can be', T. M. Charles-Edwards, 'Addenda', *Eccl. Hist. Comm.*, pp. 234–5). (c) Other relevant aspects of this paper are raised in the Additional Notes to chapters 6 (Irish Church), and in chapter 8 (aristocratic culture). But something may be said here, finally, about the near universal orthodoxy at this time of writing that the disappearance of furnished burial over the seventh century was unconnected with conversion. It is another proposition asserted with such confidence, mostly but not only by archaeologists (D. A. Bullough, 'Burial, Community and Belief in the Early Medieval West', *Ideal*, pp. 177–201), that we begin to wonder how we ever thought there was a connection between the disappearance of furnished burial and conversion. Yet the connection is better supported by evidence (not to say common sense) than currently supposed. For one thing, a common element in lists of pagan customs to be forsaken is 'sacrificia mortuorum': e.g. Gregory II to Hesse and Thuringia and bishops of Bavaria and Alamannia, *Br. Bon.* 43–4, pp. 69, 71, even 'eating' them, 80, p. 174. This might mean a number of things, but a letter attributed to Charlemagne's time (Lange, *Texte*, above, n. 36, p. 171), spells out: 'sacrificia mortuorum *circa defuncta corpora apud sepulchra illorum*'. I do wonder, unlike Professor Bullough ('Burial', p. 188), whether it was easy to distinguish banned 'sacrifices' from tolerated 'ritual meals and recurrent libations at or over the tombs of the dead'; at the very least, this sort of prohibition should have discouraged supply of food or drink in graves, and might extend to any sort of offering in a corpse's favour. Second and much more important, whatever canon law may or may not say on this issue, Holy Writ leaves no doubt at all about the proper use of treasure. Christianity's founders said more than once that wealth is best stored in Heaven. To take just one passage of the Psalms (Vulgate, no. 48), surely known as such to any remotely regular attender at mass, 'No man can buy his own ransom, or pay a price to God for his life . . . he cannot buy life without end, nor avoid coming to the grave. He knows that wise men and fools must both . . . leave their wealth to others. Their graves are their homes for ever, their dwelling-place from age

to age, though their names spread wide through the land. In his riches, man lacks wisdom.' Which, being interpreted in the seventh and eighth centuries, meant that riches, even if deposited in the earth, did nothing to boost status where it mattered, in Heaven, and was better devoted to God's causes, in short 'the Church'. This might mean that, even if not prompted by baptism, as is precluded by archaeological chronology in England as elsewhere, emptied graves *were* closely linked to the growth of church endowment in subsequent generations – which is just what chronology *does* suggest.

3

Bede, the *Bretwaldas* and the Origins of the *Gens Anglorum*

W hen King Alfred asked the archbishop of Rheims for help in restoring ecclesiastical order to his kingdom, Fulk thought it symbolic that he had applied to the see of the Apostle of the Franks:

> Just as once the *gens Francorum* deserved to be freed by the same blessed Remigius from manifold error and to know the worship of the One True God, so the *gens Anglorum* may beg to receive such a man from his see and teaching.

For the work of Augustine, 'the first bishop of your *gens*, sent to you by your Apostle, the blessed Gregory', was necessarily incomplete.[1] The late ninth-century bishops of Rheims were among the first to draw parallels between the histories of the Franks and the English, the historical method which has been so distinctive and rewarding a feature of Professor Wallace-Hadrill's scholarship and teaching. The purpose of this paper is to ask how the equation was possible. How did it come about that, by the later ninth century, one could speak of a 'gens Francorum' and a 'gens Anglorum' in almost the same breath, when the political history of sub-Roman Britain was ostensibly so different from that of Gaul that such continental scholars as Wenskus and Wolfram omitted the English from their surveys of the emergence of the European kingdoms?[2]

The contrasts were real enough. The kingdoms which emerged quite rapidly in post-Roman Gaul, Spain and Italy had perhaps two main ingredients. One was the Germanic *Heerkönig*, the leader of an extended retinue of warriors and their kin, recruited from various tribes of which one was usually dominant and gave its name to the rest; such 'tribes in the making' focused their common identity on a king, who may thereby have acquired 'sacral' status.[3] The second was the indigenous educated class of the province in question, which Christianized and to variable extents Romanized the newcomers, and which, in search of an at least relatively ordered regime, helped to promote a single royal authority within the boundaries of that

province; King Theudebert's circle is a case in point.[4] In the special case of Ireland, it was the vernacular learned tradition of the *filid* and *brithemain* that fostered a sense of cultural Irish community, and the ideal, if not the reality, of Irish political unity.[5]

These key ingredients are not very evident in Anglo-Saxon Britain. Bede's most notorious passage categorizes the invaders as Angles, Saxons and Jutes; he says nothing of tribal mergers or unified leadership. The vast archaeological debate which he inspired is now simmering down into a consensus that, while Anglian and Saxon cultures tended to merge along their common border, in England as on the continent, they remain distinct at their geographical poles in each area; and the Jutes were something else again.[6] Chadwick believed that the Anglo-Saxon invaders must have been 'large and organized forces', like the Vikings and the Normans. He therefore postulated that the Anglians already dominated the Saxons in the continental homeland, and that the invasion was, in effect, led by an Anglian *Heerkönig*. A relic of this united enterprise was the *imperium* over the southern English which Bede ascribed to seven kings between the late fifth and the later seventh century, and to which one text of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* seems to give the title *Bretwalda*. The political and dialectal divisions evident in our earliest sources come later, like the 'early medieval principality' on the continent.[7] This characteristically brilliant and seemingly modern reconstruction does at least explain what Chadwick rightly called the 'inexplicable fact' that even Saxons came to call themselves 'English'. But it was effectively challenged by Hoops, and its recent archaeological resurrection seems unlikely to command faith.[8] Such courageous attempts to conjure an Anglian Clovis out of the mists of the fifth and sixth centuries have to confront more than the multiplicity of seventh-century kingdoms, to which the familiar 'Heptarchy' hardly does justice, or the survival of at least four to be mopped up piecemeal by the Vikings.[9] Whereas continental barbarians and even the Irish equipped themselves with a unitary legend, it is modern scholars, not the Anglo-Saxons, who fabricate the links between the invaders of Britain.[10]

It has also been suggested that the Anglo-Saxons inherited the unity of *Britannia* in much the same sense as did the Franks that of *Gallia* or the Visigoths that of *Hispania*. The word *Bretwalda*, meaning 'Britain-ruler', could express the idea of an Empire of Britain, transmitted and promoted by the Britons themselves, and Bede's seven overlords correspond significantly with the seven 'imperatores a Romanis in Britannia' listed in the *Historia Brittonum* of 'Nennius'.[11] But, though scholars have more faith than they used to in 'continuity' from Roman Britain to Anglo-Saxon England, the emphatically German culture and resolutely pagan faith of the Anglo-Saxons in 597 are decisive evidence of discontinuity at the level of the educated class, and it was this class that mattered when it came to political horizons.[12] A possibly archaic Welsh poem envisages Cadwallon of Gwynedd and Edwin of Northumbria competing for the rule of Britain; but this competitive hostility is by no means the same thing as the collaboration of continental *Romani* with Germanic hegemonies.[13] The numerical coincidence between Bede and 'Nennius' is scarcely as

persuasive now as it seemed when the latter was thought to pre-date the former;[14] indeed, given that 'Nennius' admits an alternative tradition that there were *nine* such emperors, and that its list is a tissue of historical confusions, it seems more likely that Bede influenced 'Nennius' than vice versa. Finally, Britannia as the Romano-Britons saw it was not the same place as the *Bretwalda*'s sphere of operations. The *Bretwalda* was essentially a southumbrian overlord, though some are described as supreme over virtually the whole island (pp. 111–13). Nothing in the administrative geography of Roman Britain really explains why *Britannia* should have come to be bounded by the Humber rather than the Wall.[15] The 'Orbis Britanniae' in a wider sense was not a Roman political unit, like Isidore's *Spania*, but a geographical and literary expression. Some Anglo-Saxon kings aspired to rule it all, just as King Authari of the Lombards could touch a column on the very toe of Italy with his spear and declare that it marked the boundaries of the Lombards; but the ambition need owe nothing to the ideals or assistance of the Britons.[16]

If the Anglo-Saxons had no 'Romani' to nourish their coherence, their own poets and law-speakers hardly compared with the *filid* and *brithemain*. Germanic learned classes left few traces from Caesar's day onwards, except perhaps in Scandinavia.[17] The legislation of Aethelbert and Ine is professedly Kentish or West Saxon, not allegedly national like the early Irish law-tracts. As Chadwick pointed out, early Anglo-Saxon poets drew their heroes from the Germanic world as a whole, as did the authors of the royal genealogies;[18] theirs was a cosmopolitan rather than a national vision. The use of the vernacular was better and earlier developed in England than anywhere else in north-western Europe except Ireland; but its earliest products did very little to establish a sense of 'Englishness'.

Yet, by *Maldon* and the laws of Cnut, such a sense had developed.[19] In the tenth century England was permanently united, politically and administratively: much earlier than France, let alone Spain, Italy or Germany.[20] It is of course smaller than France or Germany, less geographically intractable than Spain or Italy; but the Anglo-Saxons began so much further back on the road to unity than the Franks or Visigoths. One might argue that English unification was only maintained because the Normans abolished the great earldoms, which do resemble incipient territorial principalities; but the important point is that the makers of England could exploit what German historians of the theme would call an English *Zusammengehörigkeits-gefühl* that was evident by the later ninth century, at least in most exalted circles:

> So completely had learning decayed in England [*Angelkynn*] that there were very few on this side of the Humber who could apprehend their services in English [*Englisc*] . . . and I think there were not many beyond the Humber . . . I cannot recollect a single one south of the Thames when I succeeded to the kingdom.[21]

The most interesting thing about Alfred's famous observations is not their much-discussed accuracy, but the fact that, though himself a *Saxon*, and though

acknowledging the basic frontiers of Anglo-Saxon politics, the Humber and the Thames, he yet called the whole area 'Angelkynn' and its language 'Englisc'. If there are hints of propaganda in his claim, when treating with Guthrum, to be spokesman of 'ealles Angelcynnes witan', propaganda is wasted on a hostile or uncomprehending audience.[22] Gregory of Tours did not, unlike modern scholars, entitle his work the *History of the Franks*, but Bede did call his the *Ecclesiastical History of the English*. People in all parts of what is now England considered themselves English long before many of their neighbours considered themselves French.[23]

This was extraordinary; just how extraordinary, in European terms, few modern English historians have realized. For most, the process of English unification has seemed almost organic, its yeast, once again, the southern *imperium* whose leader was the *Bretwalda*. Conceived in the very dawn of Anglo-Saxon historical studies as a 'species of Agamemnon', the *Bretwalda*'s role was definitively expounded by Stenton. *Bretwalda* was 'not a formal style accurately expressing the position of its bearer', but belonged 'to the sphere of encomiastic poetry', its origin to be 'sought in the halls of some early king whose victories entitled him, in that uncritical atmosphere, to be regarded as lord of Britain'. This military leadership 'gradually assumes a political character'; by the end of the seventh century, overlords treated subordinate kings like members of their own hereditary nobility, confirming or annulling their charters, taking their tribute, leading them to war. Offa of Mercia, who claimed to be 'rex Anglorum', deprived many lesser kings of royal status itself. Thus, a 'primitive confederacy' paved the way for 'the ultimate unity of England'.[24]

But it may be noted that until Chadwick revived them in 1907, the *Bretwalda*'s historiographical fortunes were mixed. Kemble dismissed the *imperium* as 'a mere fluctuating superiority such as we may find in Hawaii, Tahiti or New Zealand, due to success in war, and lost in turn by defeat'. As a result of his scathing critique, Stubbs was cautious about *Bretwaldas*, and, in an important judgement which Plummer endorsed, observed: 'The Archbishop of Canterbury stood constantly, as the *Bretwalda* never stood, at the head of an organized and symmetrical system.'[25] Controversy has raged in German historical scholarship on the closely related question of the imperial terminology of 'insular' writers and its contribution to the coronation of Charlemagne on Christmas Day 800.[26] Even Stenton found the issue 'an enigma', defying 'full solution', no easier to make sense of today than it must have been in the ninth century.[27] And while Eric John's sparkling essay on the 'Orbis Britanniae' brought the historiographical wheel full circle back to Palgrave's pre-Kemble 'Empire of Britain', the most recent writers, English and German, have begun to show some of Stubbs's caution.[28] Can an institution which has caused historians such difficulties really have been the key factor in English unification? In this paper, I shall first argue that in fact it was not, and then that the unity of the *gens Anglorum*, an ideal long before it was a reality, can be traced to an altogether different source.[29]

One must admit at the outset that the hard evidence for the status of *Bretwalda* amounts to just three items. The first is Bede's passage on the death of Æthelbert of Kent:

> He was the third English king to rule over all the southern kingdoms which are divided from the north by the river Humber; but he was the first to enter the kingdom of heaven. The first king to hold the like sovereignty was Ælle, king of the South Saxons; the second was Cælin, king of the West Saxons, known in their own language as Ceawlin; the third was Æthelbert . . . the fourth was Redwald, king of the East Angles, who, while Aethelbert yet lived, conceded to him the leadership of his own people; the fifth was Edwin, king of the Northumbrians . . . (who) had still greater power and ruled over all the inhabitants of Britain, English and Britons alike, except for Kent only . . . The sixth to rule within the same bounds was Oswald, the most Christian king of the Northumbrians, while the seventh was his brother Oswiu who for a time held almost the same territory, and also overwhelmed and made tributary the peoples of the Picts and the Scots.

Bede says similar things about Æthelbert, Edwin, Oswald and Oswiu elsewhere; and, at the very end of his book, he seems to add Æthelbald of Mercia to the roll.[30] The second piece of evidence is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*'s annal for 827 (*recte* 829):

> And that year King Egbert conquered the kingdom of the Mercians, and everything south of the Humber; and he was the eighth king who was 'Bretwalda' [*sic* MS A; other MSS, 'Brytenwalda' etc.].

After listing the other seven, from Bede, the annal continues that Egbert attacked Northumbria and was offered 'submission and peace'.[31] Finally, there is the Ismere diploma, an 'original' charter of 736, where Æthelbald of Mercia is styled, in the *dispositio*, 'king not only of the Mercians but also of all the kingdoms that are known by the general name *Sutangli*', and in the witness-list, 'rex Britanniae'. The charter thus confirms Bede's hint that Æthelbald should be added to his list, and it supports the *Chronicle*'s implication that the southern overlord was known as 'ruler of Britain'.[32]

The Anglo-Saxon historian is used to inadequate evidence, but in a case as important as this the failure of the dog to let out more than the odd yelp is curious: there are many other charters and many other annals. It deserved emphasis that the word *Bretwalda* itself is attested by one text of one annal; many scholars prefer *Brytenwalda* (wide-ruler?) as the original form.[33] Moreover, there is an ambiguity throughout this evidence. Bede's *Bretwaldas*, the Northumbrians apart, were overlords south of the Humber, as was Æthelbald; and it is after his southern conquests but before his Northumbrian campaign that the *Chronicle* claims the status for Egbert. Yet it is possible to call such an overlord 'ruler of Britain'. It was presumably these contradictory elements in the title that led Stenton to suggest that it was coined

in an 'uncritical atmosphere'. The evidence establishes that southern overlordship was once a live political concept, and it may well, as has been suggested, have originated in an anti-British confederation under a *dux*.[34] But in order to give it an abiding significance and to include among its holders kings that the lists omit, such as the Mercians, Penda, Wulfhere and above all Offa, historians have recourse to more controversial evidence.

In the first place, did the use of *imperium* and its cognates by Bede and others reflect a coherent and uniquely 'insular' imperial ideology, hegemonial rather than universal in character, which Alcuin then exported to influence what happened to Charlemagne on Christmas Day 800? Dr McClure is not alone in doubting whether Bede's language can be pressed so far. Bede uses imperial vocabulary for Egfrith and Osred of Northumbria, Cædwalla and Ine of Wessex, and Wulfhere and Æthelred of Mercia, few of whom feature even in modern lists of *Bretwaldas*, but never of his special hero Oswald.[35] All one can say is that, if one excludes regnal formulae like 'anno imperii...', and also cases where 'imperium Anglorum' means simply 'English rule', Bede tends to reserve such terminology for more powerful kings. Adomnan's assertion that, after his defeat of Cadwallon, Oswald 'was ordained by God the emperor of the whole of Britain' must now be seen in the light that 'such high-flown language testifies to ambition rather than achievement' when used by Adomnan and the Iona annalists of their Uí Néill kinsmen in Ireland, powerful though these were.[36] When Boniface denounces the laicization of monasteries, 'whether by emperor or king or anyone endowed with the secular power of prefects or counts', he seems to be asserting a general principle rather than referring specifically to Æthelbald as emperor; the phrase 'imperator vel rex' recurs in the Good Friday liturgy of the *Gelasianum*.[37] Likewise, when addressing Æthelbald as 'inclita Anglorum imperii sceptra gubernanti', he is clearly echoing Aldhelm's address to the Northumbrian King Aldfrith, though he obviously expects much of Æthelbald's power.[38] Finally, Alcuin himself used imperial vocabulary in much the same way as Bede. When the men of Kent, a 'regnum imperiale', are told: 'From you the first power of empire proceeded, and the origin of the Catholic Faith sprung up', the reference may well be to Bede's account of the power and salvation of Æthelbert.[39] Its connection with Alcuin's now notorious vision of an *imperium Christianum*, an empire of the Faith entrusted to Charlemagne rather than a hegemony over kings won by the sword, is tenuous.[40]

'Insular' imperial terminology suggests that some kings were more powerful than others and that some of them liked to be flattered. It does not necessarily reflect a constitutional principle that could be transmitted from one people to another. English and continental writers had Isidore to tell them that an *imperator* was more than a *rex*, and was the title of the greatest rulers of all; powerful biblical kings are sometimes described in imperial terms.[41] In the circumstances, it is less surprising that such language was occasionally applied to great contemporary kings than that it was not used more often. We can show that Bede was no Humpty-

Dumpty in his use of words like *imperium* only if we can also show that he was describing real and systematically organized power. That remains to be seen.

The same goes for the royal titles in Anglo-Saxon charters, which, though still at this stage written in the most prominent local *scriptorium*, may be considered in some sense 'official', because bishops and abbots were regularly at court.[42] Apart from the styles in the Ismere Diploma, there are three other significant categories of title. First, kingship of the Mercians and surrounding peoples is attributed to Æthelbald at the end of his reign and, in a not wholly reputable series, to Offa; but as the peoples are not named, these do not take us much further.[43] Second, an apparent 'original' of 798 calls Cenwulf of Mercia 'rector et imperator Merciorum regni'; this charter, like some others of this king, is dated by his 'imperial' year.[44] This puzzlingly tentative title is perhaps best explained by Alcuin's 'imperial' letter to the Kentishmen: the style is confined to charters that were probably written at Canterbury, and there are other Alcunian traces in this charter and in one of the next year.[45] In any case, it shows, like the vast majority of Cenwulf's charters, that what mattered to him was the *regnum Merciorum*, which included Kent and much else besides.

Third and most important, there are charters claiming kingship of 'the English'. Many are transparent forgeries.[46] Stenton argued in 1918 that three charters of Offa for Christ Church Canterbury, which style him 'rex Anglorum' (774), 'rex totius Anglorum patriae' (774) and again 'rex Anglorum' (?795) were 'originals', but he was most uncharacteristically mistaken. All three belong to that most instantly suspect of all categories of Anglo-Saxon records, the single-sheet in much later script than the date of the purported transaction. The third is certainly a tenth-century forgery; although those of '774' are probably not complete fabrications, the scribe of the first also penned the deeply suspect grant of Pagham by Cædwalla to Wilfrid and ultimately Canterbury.[47] Offa has this title in charters from Selsey and Worcester as well as Christ Church.[48] One is tempted to think that it occurs so often that it must be a genuine feature in even the most dubious text. But 'rex Anglorum' was the title used in many tenth- and eleventh-century charters. Offa's greatness was well known by then, and a forger might well have used it: it appears in only one of the surviving versions of two authentic Worcester charters.[49] In genuinely 'original' Kentish diplomas of the last part of his reign he is 'rex Merciorum'; those who accept that he was 'rex Anglorum' in the 770s must explain why he ceased to be.[50]

One reason for Stenton's belief that the titles of the *Bretwalda* period were 'sober statements of fact . . . clearly intended to be understood in their literal meaning' was that they were so much less inflated than the grandiloquent claims of charters from Æthelstan's time onwards.[51] But at least the latter are consistent, and reveal consistency of ambition. Like the literary sources, charters before the tenth century speak mostly of kingship, and with reference to the king's own people. Nor does simple language in itself prove good faith. It is hard to see that Æthelbald's kingship of Britain was a statement of fact, sober or otherwise, or that Offa was literally king of

the English. Charters written in ecclesiastical *scriptoria* may after all be 'official', but by the same token they were the work of courtiers. Without proof of power, their claims remain claims, howsoever couched.

Because we lack the sort of systematic description that is found in the Irish law-tracts, the only proof of a *Bretwalda*'s rightful powers is what he did in fact. But three things must be borne in mind when considering this evidence. In the first place, there is room for more complexity in the world of early Anglo-Saxon politics than the fashionable obsession with overlordship allows. It may have been because he was overlord that Æthelbert prompted the conversion of King Sæbert of Essex, though Sæbert was also his nephew.[52] But this cannot be true of Oswiu's part in the conversion of Sæbert's successor, Sigebert, which happened when Penda of Mercia's power was at its height; still less when he persuaded his son-in-law and Penda's own son to become Christian.[53] These were surely diplomatic transactions, alliances against a common enemy or treaties designed to bring an interval of peace. Thus, when Oswald married the daughter of Cynegils of Wessex, sponsored his baptism and co-founded Dorchester, this may be an instance of overlordship; equally, it may be a marriage alliance, such as two of Oswald's nephews also made with Wessex, and Oswald may have attested Cynegils's grant simply because he was there.[54] Again, Beorhtric of Wessex married Offa's daughter, but there is no charter evidence of his subordination, whereas he did attest a grant which his brother-in-law made at Bath in his presence.[55]

It is generally believed that Mercian overlords operated a smooth and regular system whereby lesser kings were first demoted in status from *rex* to *subregulus* or *dux* and then consigned to oblivion. This is strictly true only of Sussex kings.[56] Not all local rulers were subordinated natives. Berhtwald 'rex' or 'subregulus', who gave land to Malmesbury in 685, was described by Eddius as a 'praefectus' and Æthelred of Mercia's nephew; Frithuwold 'provinciae Surrianorum subregulus', who made an early grant to Chertsey, was probably not a scion of an otherwise unknown Surrey dynasty but a relative of the Frithuric who attested his charter and himself disposed of huge Middle Anglian estates.[57] Even the princes of the Hwicce, who claimed to be local by the eighth century, may have been descended from a Bernician prince installed by Penda of Mercia when he conquered the area in 628; the notoriously disputed Frankish or Bavarian origin of the Agilolfing Dukes shows how completely even imposed rulers could 'go native'.[58] Of the arguably native dynasties, that of Kent was not downgraded but displaced, after a stout fight. First, in 764, Offa replaced one Kentish king and reissued one of his grants as the associate, not the superior, of the other; by the following year, there were again two native kings. In 774, if we may thus far trust the 'rex Anglorum' charters, Offa was sole king of Kent, but the presumably indigenous King Egbert was back in charge in 778–9. Finally, from 785 at the latest, Offa was undisputed master and native kings had vanished. He was the rival, not the overlord, of Kentish kings.[59] Like the Carolingians, it

seems, Mercian overlords preferred to intrude their own king or followers rather than rely on the loyalty of local dynasties; unlike the Ottonians, they could.[60]

Offa's Kentish experiences highlight the second point about the *Bretwalda*'s 'powers', which is that we seldom know how long they lasted. Oswiu dominated Mercia for three years after his defeat of Penda; but the power over all southern England which he may have had at this stage was scarcely possible before 655 or after the revolt of Wulfhere in 658.[61] His is the one case in Bede's list where we have detailed information. Likewise, we know that in 829 Egbert also took direct control of Mercia. But the *Chronicle* admits that Wiglaf recovered his throne next year; for six years thereafter, there is no good evidence that Egbert's supremacy was acknowledged anywhere, and some that Wiglaf retrieved his predecessors' position.[62] Can a title based on such transitory achievements have been an office in any real sense? Can it have helped to unify England?

If effective hegemony was often brief, this may explain why there is just one contemporary record of one early Anglo-Saxon king taking tribute from another, though one would think this a normal function of overlordship. (The king who attempted it, Wulfhere, is not in the ancient lists, and the king who succeeded, Egfrith, is rarely in the modern.)[63] From this lone cactus in the desert of evidence historians often fall back on the oasis, or mirage, of the *Tribal Hidage*. The main reason why a list of hidages for all the southern English, headed by the Mercians, is considered the tribute-list of the Mercian empire is, very reasonably, that it looks like that. To quote Corbett, its first important student: 'Primitive peoples do not undertake statistical enquiries out of mere curiosity.'[64] Even if this is true – and some modern scholars prefer a more 'literary' interpretation of the document, like the scribe of the earliest extant manuscript, who immediately proceeded to list such other well-known national characteristics as 'victory of the Egyptians', 'stupidity of the Anglo-Saxons' and 'lust of the Irish' – the *Tribal Hidage* might still represent what one great Mercian king hoped to collect on one occasion. It does not prove that *Bretwaldas* took tribute everywhere, regularly and as of right.[65]

Which brings one to a third and final consideration. Some Anglo-Saxon kings were so powerful that they could impose their wills on other kings; but this was not necessarily a matter of accepted political manners rather than naked political force. Historians have suggested that Æthelbert's 'assistance', when Augustine met the British bishop somewhere in the province of the Hwicce, reflected his status as *Bretwalda*: did he actually do more than supply a powerful escort which then ringed the meeting-place?[66] Mercian kings seized London from the East Saxons and Berkshire (perhaps more besides) from Wessex; the West Saxon kings are usually thought to have resisted prolonged Mercian dominance, and perhaps Essex did too.[67] The most fundamental and discussed of the *Bretwalda*'s 'prerogatives' was the right to confirm a subordinate's charters, and here one must distinguish between two types of intervention: advance permission, specified in the *dispositio*, which shows

potential control of the transaction; and ratification, recorded in the witness-list, which could, sometimes visibly did, occur long after it. There are no known cases of a presumptively native king himself acknowledging an overlord's prior consent.[68] The rulers who do this are sub-kings or kings under external patronage, like one of the 'reges dubii vel externi' who disturbed Kent in the later seventh century, the rulers of the Hwicce, and eventually those of Sussex.[69] This is logical enough: whether a *subregulus/dux* was locally deposed or externally imposed, his overlord would wish to control the royal demesne, and we can see that Mercian kings were disposing of Hwiccian property as early as the local rulers.[70] But it proves nothing about an overlord's rights vis-à-vis other kings.

The nodal evidence of the necessity of advance permission is the famous 'Aldhun affair'. In 799, Cenwulf restored three estates to Christ Church. Two had been given to the community by King Egbert of Kent; the third he gave to his *minister* Aldhun, who himself gave it to Christ Church:

> But afterwards Offa, king and glory of Britain, transferred the possession of these lands, and distributed them to his thegns, saying that it was wrong that his thegn should have presumed to give land allotted to him by his lord into the power of another without his permission.

Stenton took this to mean that Offa regarded Egbert as his thegn and denied his right to dispose of royal property; it was thus the *locus classicus* of an overlord's rights in this respect. Others have understood that, in Offa's view, it was Aldhun who should have had Egbert's consent. The scribe's command of Latin is such as to support neither side decisively.[71] In any case, there is another equally instructive instance of Offa's aggressive attitude to church lands. In 781, the Worcester community were told 'that we were wrongly holding in our power without hereditary right the inheritance of his kinsman, King Æthelbald'. But in the case of at least one estate this was demonstrably untrue; for Æthelbald's 'rex Britanniae' diploma had granted Ismere to a retainer, and his son had passed it to Worcester with Offa's own express permission![72] In other words, Offa sometimes had no respect for even his predecessor's charters and was prepared to sue highly dubious arguments (he probably got what he really wanted out of it, though not Ismere). Perhaps then, we should view that Aldhun affair as essentially a question of power rather than principle. In practice, it was because Offa had replaced the kings of Kent that he claimed control of their *fisc* and reserved the right to revoke their grants.[73] It is a fair bet that he and others did so often; after all, the extant records concern only church property that was ultimately restored.[74]

It was thus 'common sense' for a charter's beneficiary, anyway responsible for drafting it in the case of the greater churches, to seek the consent of a threatening neighbour, either at the time or when the threat materialized. The bishop of Rochester did so in or after 765.[75] Offa's consent to all Sussex charters either

evidently was, or else may well have been, retrospective.[76] In the only known West Saxon case, a charter of Cynewulf for Bath, it comes right at the end of the witness-list, and Offa controlled the abbey from 781.[77] There is little evidence in all this of constitutional principle. Interventions by one king in the grants of another are sufficiently explained either by social and diplomatic relations between rulers or by power and the fear of power; and if such power could be fiercely real it could not necessarily be sustained. In a nutshell, a king with great power might be hailed as *Bretwalda*; but a *Bretwalda* may not, as such, have had powers.

In tracing the remorseless growth of English unity, it is easy to forget that overlords were resented and indeed resisted. Oswiu and Egbert were soon expelled from Mercia. The native dynasty was restored in Kent and probably East Anglia as soon as Offa was dead; it took Cenwulf two years to crush the Kentish rebels, who expelled the Mercian archbishop and may have sacked the cathedral archives.[78] Even Oswald's remains were shut out of Bardney in Lindsey; 'because he belonged to another kingdom and had once conquered them, they pursued him even when dead with their former hatred.'[79] As in *Beowulf*, so in the world of its 'audience', the struggle for power could cause bitter feuds between kings and noblemen. Bede thought the death of Ælfwine, brother of the vanquished king and brother-in-law of the victor, at the Battle of the Trent was 'grounds for sharper war and longer enmity between the kings and their fierce peoples'. Theodore made peace by securing compensation for the vengeful Egfrith; but, as in Beowulf's famous account of how hostilities between Dane and Heathobard would break out at the very wedding-feast designed to bring peace, more than royal feelings were involved in 679. A Northumbrian warrior would have been killed by his Mercian captor had his rank been detected at once: 'Now you deserve to die because all my brothers and relatives were killed in that battle.'[80] This was no basis for cosy political consensus between the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

But it may explain what has puzzled historians since Kemble about the extant lists of *Bretwaldas*; the omission of the great Mercian kings from Penda to Cenwulf, though their power is better documented than most.[81] Stenton's first suggestion was that the *Chronicle*'s gap was 'quite possibly nothing more subtle than the mistake of an unintelligent annalist'. Later, though readier to countenance the *Chronicle*'s 'prejudice', he thought that Bede closed his list where he did because he 'wished to avoid the anti-climax of carrying it beyond the great name of Oswiu'.[82] One might reply that the *Chronicle*'s ability to omit at least three, perhaps six, of the Mercian kings with claims to the status betrayed a degree of carelessness bordering on the wilful; and Bede's reluctance to include Wulfhere suggests that Northumbrian pride had influenced his stylistic taste (he shows that Wulfhere's religious achievement was no less than Oswiu's). Much the simplest solution is that, like the Irish kingship of Tara, the *Bretwalda* was less an objectively realized office than a subjectively perceived status. Just as Adomnan and the Iona annals claimed for the Uí Néill (and Munster sources for Munster kings) what would not be achieved

before Brian Boru and could not then be sustained by his successors and their rivals; so great English kings claimed, or were flattered by, the title, and one acknowledged such claims in one's own kings, or those who left one alone, but not in one's enemies.[83] Alfredian or not, the *Chronicle* was written in Wessex, and we know from Asser that neither Offa nor his daughter was fondly remembered there.[84] Aethelbald's stirring titles were probably composed at Worcester, whose patron he was, just as Cenwulf's imperial style may arise from his *rapprochement* with Canterbury after 798.[85] Bede's own list is patriotically Northumbrian, but also shows traces of Kentish influence: it is quoted in the context of material about Æthelbert, and rule over Kent is either delayed or excluded for his successors.[86] The reason why Stenton had to discover 'The Supremacy of the Mercian Kings' is a basic fact of Anglo-Saxon history. There are Northumbrian and West Saxon sources, with Kentish traditions embodied in both, but only charters are *committed* to Mercian greatness.

So the debate returns to the three items of evidence where it began. There was an ideal of southumbrian supremacy and a strangely related ideal of the kingship of Britain. We can only guess how the former originated and was linked to the latter, and we may not be able to give the combination any constitutional significance. We know that the much more trumpeted power of tenth- and eleventh-century kings over Britain as a whole was occasional and sometimes resisted; it certainly did nothing for the unification of Britain. We can hardly claim more for their pre-Viking counterparts even in England itself: it seems that attempts to realize power stirred up political currents that have muddied our view of who was *Bretwalda* and who was not.[87] Such 'progress' as there was towards unity was a matter of larger kingdoms swallowing smaller. It had a long way to go when the Vikings transformed the situation: neither Offa at Benson nor Egbert at Wroughton won a 'World's Decisive Battle' like Clovis at Vouillé.

It is hard to resist the feeling that early English historiography has been as determined by the extraordinary success story that the making of England ultimately was, as that of Germany has been by its own prolonged 'failure'.[88] English unification was not taken for granted, but the hard-won triumphs of the tenth (and nineteenth) century were 'read back' in quest of their natural roots. The *Bretwalda* filled a need. But the Anglo-Saxons were not spared the sort of pressures that undermined or obstructed unification elsewhere. If *Beowulf* is indeed a window on the thought-world of the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy, their minds dwelt on local grievance and international glory.[89] In the strictly political sphere, Alfred the Great was no better off than Otto the Great. The paradox is that there is evidence of a remarkably precocious sense of common 'Englishness', and not just in politically interested circles; it was memorably expressed by what may have been a Northumbrian source in the *Chronicles* for Edward the Confessor's reign.[90] But it was much older. Such a sense must help to explain the making and sheer persistence of England. But its source was not the almost unchartable White Nile of early Germanic politics.

What we have to explain is not only the sense of community which Anglo-Saxons acquired against the political odds, but also the fact that they all came to be called English. Alfred knew that he was a Saxon: when he took control of south-west Mercia in the 880s, his new title was 'rex Anglorum [et] Saxonum' or 'rex Anglsaxonum'.[91] But he also wrote of 'Angelkynn' and 'Englisc'. His nostalgia for the learning and glory that 'England' had lost was undoubtedly inspired by Bede. From his earliest works, Bede stressed the common destiny of all his fellow barbarians in Britain: 'Anglorum gens in Brittaniam venit ... Saxones in Britannia fidem Christi suscipiunt'.[92] And such hesitation about their proper name was later rare; in the early Apocalypse commentary, he wrote of the 'laziness of our English people', who had recently received the Faith from Gregory, and in one of the last works he pointed out that, because the Greek for darkness was singular, his 'English' readers need not bow to Latin authority by making it plural in their own language![93] His was an 'Ecclesiastical History of our island and people', but the 'gens Anglorum' is well to the fore. Except when founding one of the most flourishing of archaeological industries by describing the continental origins of Britain's invaders, Bede only used 'Saxon' when it was in his foreign source, when it was accurate (as for the East, West or South Saxons) or when referring to the vernacular.[94] These English were as much a singular 'gens' or 'natio' as the 'populi' and 'regna' that went to make them up, and they have their singular Church: Theodore was the first archbishop obeyed by 'omnis Anglorum ecclesia'.[95] The island's Celtic inhabitants give the story its context and play their part in it. But the main theme is the growth and expansion of the Christian Faith of the English people, from Gregory the pope to Egbert the pilgrim; it is the story of their Covenant.

Bede was to some extent a visionary (and also, it must be said, an Angle). If he inspired Alfred's English consciousness, neither was necessarily typical. Yet there are indications that a sense of Englishness was spreading in the ninth century. Alcuin wrote to Offa of 'regnum tuum immo Anglorum omnium' and denied infidelity to 'King Offa and the English people'; to the men of Kent he strikingly described 'divisio ... inter populos et gentes Anglorum' as a 'regnum in se divisum'.[96] Like Bede, he was patriotically Northumbrian, but many of his letters home express what one might call a sense of English national destiny: 'Britannia' was the 'Patria' which English ancestors won because of the sins of the Britons, and which was now imperilled by Viking assault because of the sins of the English themselves. At a humbler – and often non-Anglian – level, charters from the later eighth century frequently use some such phrase as 'wuamdiu fides Catholica in gente Anglorum perseveret', and in 816 'English bishops' were told to emancipate 'Englishmen'.[97] Charters also refer to a common vernacular, though this is usually, as in Bede, described as 'Saxon' (and 'Saxonia', never 'Anglia', is the preferred geographical term).[98] Moreover, as Fulk's letter shows, the habit caught on abroad. Like the Celts (to this day), seventh- and eighth-century continentals always called the Germanic inhabitants of Britain 'Saxones'; the term 'Anglo-Saxon' may have been

coined to avoid the confusion this created with the 'Old' Saxons.[99] But whereas for Einhard Alcuin was 'de Britanniae Saxonici generis', Notker simply says that he was 'de natione Anglorum'.[100]

Much more important, Bede no more invented the 'gens Anglorum' than did Alfred. Long before he heard of the 'candela ecclesiae' in the North, Boniface had acquired a sense not of national destiny but of national shame. He repeatedly observed how badly the 'English' were shown up by their propensity to sodomy, adultery and drunkenness, not to mention the forced labour of monks. He could appeal to 'all God-fearing *Englishmen*' for help in converting continental Saxons, who were of the same 'blood and bone'.[101] For Eddius, 'gens nostra' meant Sussex as well as Northumbria, and Wilfrid was spared from execution at Lyons when identified as 'transmarinus de Anglorum gente ex Britannia'.[102] For the author of the Whitby *Life of Gregory*, it meant both Northumbria and the English as a whole, and 'noster Gregorius' would lead the 'gentem Anglorum' before the Judgement Seat.[103] Of the earliest English writers, only Aldhelm, it seems, had never heard of the 'Angli'; he described himself and his kings as 'Saxon', and he probably meant 'West Saxon'. But even Aldhelm could see the 'citizens whom fertile Britain holds in its lap' as pupils of Gregory, and he claimed to the Northumbrian King Aldfrith that no one before him 'nostrae stirpis prosapia genitum et Germanicae gentis cunabilis confotum' had attempted such an exercise as his *De metris*; his contemporary, King Ine, already called his West Saxon subjects 'English', if we may trust the extant text of his code.[104]

National sentiments in learned or official sources are no more proof of political realities than imperial terminology. But the remarkable thing, in the political circumstances, is that they existed at all. Equally remarkable is the associated victory of 'Angle' over 'Saxon'. At first, these terms were to some extent interchangeable: 'Saxonia' (like 'Germania') may have been borrowed from neighbours, and the foreign pedagogues who first taught the Anglo-Saxons Latin probably described their 'lingua' as 'Saxonica'.[105] Given the exclusively 'Saxon' terminology of all external sources before Charlemagne's day, it is perhaps surprising that it did not prevail internally. Instead, Saxons like Boniface and Alfred spoke of 'the English'. Those who have even seen a problem here either, like Chadwick, invoke the dim possibilities of the invasion period, or else point to Anglian political and cultural dominance in the seventh and eighth centuries. But why should Alfred and his predecessors have wished to acknowledge Mercian dominance in this way? Why should Boniface, with his debt to Aldhelm and his ignorance of Bede until the last decade of his long life, have thought Anglian culture superior?[106]

There is another possible way of explaining why the unity of the 'gens Anglorum' was at least an ideal as soon as we have written sources, but it is so obvious as to seem almost banal. The *Stammsagen* of the Franks and the Lombards began with puns, respectively by a Roman Emperor and a Germanic god. Bede's story begins, in effect, with a pun by a future pope. Bede had his doubts about this famous episode,

and modern historians have more. But one of its circumstantial elements is that the pagan slave-boys who so impressed Gregory genuinely were Anglians: they came from the Deiran kingdom of Ælle.[107] And this helps to explain an otherwise very strange thing. The Germanic invaders of Britain were known throughout the West as 'Saxons' until long after Gregory's day; even Procopius, who had probably seen an Angle, knew that the Angles were not the only barbarians in Britain.[108] But Gregory's copious correspondence *never* describes the targets of his mission as other than 'Angli'. For his tidy Roman mind, the 'gens Anglorum' were as much the barbarian masters of Britain as were the Franks of Gaul, the Goths of Spain, or the Lombards of much of Italy. Æthelbert was 'rex Anglorum' as the descendants of Brunechildis were 'reges Francorum'. The 'Anglorum ecclesia', the 'Anglorum animae' were entrusted to Augustine, 'episcopo Anglorum', together (and this is also important) with 'omnes Brittaniae sacerdotes', 'Britannorum omnes episcopos'.[109] Gregory was of course wrong about many aspects of conditions in Britain; very probably, he was wrong to apply an 'English' label to Æthelbert and all other barbarians in Britain and he may well have exaggerated Æthelbert's power. But the point about his vision of a single 'ecclesia' for a single 'gens Anglorum', however it arose, was that this powerful image soon acquired a reality of its own.[110]

Above all it did so at Canterbury. Canterbury never produced its own historian (unless it was Bede), and its notorious post-Conquest forgeries are no substitute for the archives probably destroyed in 796–8.[111] We can still see that, in spite of its precarious start, Canterbury took the rights and responsibilities bequeathed by Gregory very seriously indeed. The 679 Council of Hatfield styled Theodore 'archiepiscopus Britanniae', and he was 'archbishop of the English' in the epilogue to his *Penitential*. His successor, Berhtwald, was 'Bretone heahbiscop' in Wihtred's law-code, and was addressed by the bishop of London as 'totius Brettaniae gubernacula regenti'.[112] When the final creation of the archbishopric of York restricted its official sphere to the area south of the Humber, Canterbury fought off Offa's scheme for a Lichfield archbishopric as the heir of Augustine and Gregory, apostles of the 'gens Anglorum'. In 814–16, the bishop of Lichfield acknowledged Canterbury as 'caput totius gentis Anglorum'; and when Archbishop Wulfred clashed violently with Cenwulf, a Christ Church charter complained that 'tota gens Anglorum' was deprived of his ministry for almost six years.[113] Canterbury had no doubt about the unity of its flock, the 'gens Anglorum' (and Canterbury sources inevitably speak of 'Angli' rather than 'Saxones').

What this meant was that, from Theodore's arrival at the latest, all Anglo-Saxons were exposed to a view of themselves as a single people before God – a people who, though they lived in 'Britannia' or 'Saxonia' and though they called themselves Saxons as well as Angles, were known in Heaven as the 'gens Anglorum'. The humblest grave-digger could trace his authority back to the 'Apostles of the English' at Canterbury. Though manuscripts do not survive, it is a good guess that the 'gens Anglorum' received the same sort of liturgical boost as the 'gens Francorum'.

A significant canon of the 746–7 Council of Clovesho enjoined the celebration of the feasts of Gregory and Augustine, 'genti Anglorum missus a praefato Papa et patre nostro'; when the 'Second' English Coronation *Ordo* was drawn up in the early tenth century, the reference was to the 'regnum Anglorum vel Saxonum' at the politically sensitive moment of consecration, but where Hincmar's prayer of benediction invoked the Virgin and All Saints, the English *Ordo* has the Virgin, St Peter and 'St Gregory Apostle of the English'.[114] Aldhelm, Eddius and the author of the Whitby *Life* were all exposed in different ways to Canterbury's view of things.[115] So, above all, was Bede, whose founder-abbot had once ruled Augustine's own abbey, who explicitly acknowledged the inspiration of Biscop's successor but one there, and whose concentration on the 'gens Anglorum' within a wider British context exactly corresponds with the brief that Gregory gave Augustine.[116] It is hard to imagine a more effective way of imparting a sense of unity to diverse and feuding peoples than reminding them that they were all, as Englishmen, represented in Heaven by the same saints.

Archbishops of Canterbury had the same sort of interest in political cohesion within their sphere of authority as had sub-Roman aristocracies in the unity of their old 'province'. Too powerful an overlord could threaten the independence not only of Kent but also of the see itself, as Offa and Cenwulf showed. Nevertheless, overlords provided a necessary political context for the archiepiscopal shepherd. There is no good seventh-century evidence of a royal president for a council of the whole 'ecclesia Anglorum': Whitby was a synod of the Northumbrian Church and Hertford and Hatfield were chaired by Theodore.[117] But Æthelbald did preside at the 746–7 council, and from 781 began a series of regular meetings between the archbishop and bishops of the southern ecclesiastical province and the Mercian king and court, which are a neglected feature of the Age of Offa and Cenwulf. Most such meetings are known only from the charters issued at them; but others besides Clovesho (803) and Chelsea (816) may have produced ecclesiastical, even secular, legislation.[118] These councils showed what the archbishops had to gain from the political unity of the 'gens Anglorum', and their regularity must itself have fostered at least a sense of spiritual community among Anglo-Saxons. Sir Richard Southern suggested that 'Canterbury [under Lanfranc] inherited the pretensions of the Anglo-Saxon kings to quasi-imperial authority over Britain and the adjacent islands'; we know that Lanfranc himself thought the political and ecclesiastical unity of the English indissoluble.[119] But it may also be that powerful kings in the seventh and eighth centuries were heirs to the spiritual ambitions of Canterbury and that, though Canterbury did not invent the *Bretwalda*, it preserved, even influenced, the idea. Bede twice refers to overlords amidst information that must have come from Canterbury, and his list is curiously sensitive about Kentish freedom. Alcuin described Kent as a 'regnum imperiale'. Above all, the 'double meaning' of *Bretwalda*, at once southumbrian and pan-British, makes little sense in terms of Roman Britain, but closely corresponds with the at once wide and narrow authority which

Gregory gave Canterbury, and whose ambivalence underlay the trauma that Augustine's Church experienced after 1070.

The point reminds us that nations are made not just by conquest and political manoeuvre but by shared ideals. Whatever obstacles were still to be surmounted by tenth- and twelfth-century kings of the English, they inherited a sense of Englishness that was established in ruling circles and arguably at least residual elsewhere. Bede was probably right to focus not, like other historians of early medieval *gentes*, on migration and conquest under *Heerkönige*, but on the evangelical initiative of a pope as the key to English *Stammesbildung*. If the Anglo-Saxons had no 'Romani' to further their political coherence in their own interest, and no 'men of art' to carry ideals of common identity across political frontiers, they had a Church which played both roles. Canterbury was Apostolic to an extent that even Fulk's Rheims was not. What the *Reichskirche* allegedly did to restrain the centrifugal forces of Otto the Great's kingdom, Canterbury did in fulfilment of its own *raison d'être*.

'The beginnings of nations, those excepted of whom Sacred Books have spok'n, is to this day unknown'; thus John Milton, among the first to publish a printed history of pre-Conquest Britain, and perhaps the last to see it as a warning of God's wrath.[120] England, like all European nations, was founded in a 'Dark Age'; we shall never quite understand how. The main objection to belief in the inevitability of English unification is that it is all too easy. It is virtually incredible that what did not happen until long afterwards in countries that were initially subjected to a single political authority should have happened automatically in a country that was not. Moreover, in investing the *Bretwalda*, a status that probably did exist, and possibly under that name, with functions and rights that are frankly anachronistic, we have overlooked something more remarkable: with few of their neighbours' initial assets, the Anglo-Saxons developed a sense of communal identity which inspired one of the world's great histories, and which drew its strength from spiritual ideals rather than political realities. Indeed, it is arguable that it was because 'Englishness' was first an ideal that the enterprise launched by Alfred, his children and his grandchildren was so astoundingly successful. English communal identity may have begun with the dangers posed by whatever King Arthur later came to represent; but its persistence when the danger passed was probably due to Canterbury's papally inspired vision of their unity before God. To that extent, the long-forgotten views of Kemble and Stubbs were right. Symbolically at least, Napoleon's nation of shopkeepers began in Gregory's market-place at Rome.

NOTES

1   *BCS* 556, trans. *EHD*, p. 884; cf. Hincmar, as quoted by J. L. Nelson, 'The Church's military service in the ninth century', *SCH* XIX (1983). I wish to thank Dr Nicholas Brooks, Dr Simon Keynes, Mr James Campbell and my pupil, Heather Edwards, for

reading this paper, and Dr Jenny Wormald for her customary encouragement, assistance and indeed patience.

2   R. Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung* (Cologne-Graz, 1961), p. 574; H. Wolf-ram, 'The shaping of the early medieval kingdom', *Viator* I (1970), p. 1.

3   Wallace-Hadrill, *EGK*, pp. 2–16; Wolfram, 'Shaping of the early medieval kingdom', pp. 4–9.

4   Ibid., pp. 9–18; P. Wormald, 'Lex Scripta and Verbum Regis', in P. H. Sawyer and I. N. Wood (eds), *Early Medieval Kingship* (Leeds, 1977), pp. 125–8. Cf. also Ganz, *Ideal*, pp. 62–3.

5   D. Ó'Corráin, 'Nationality and kingship in pre-Norman Ireland', in T. M. Moody (ed.), *Historical Studies*, XI (Belfast, 1978), pp. 5–8.

6   *HE* I.115, p. 31; for an excellent recent summary of the archaeological position, D. Brown, *Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1979), pp. 25–8.

7   H. M. Chadwick, *Origins of the English Nation* (Cambridge, 1907), pp. 12–14, 182–4; H. Wolfram, 'The shaping of the early medieval principality', *Viator* II (1971), pp. 33–51.

8   Chadwick, *Origins*, p. 86; J. Hoops, 'Angeln', in *Reallexikon der germanischen Alter-tumskunde* (1911–13), I, pp. 86–95; G. Osten, 'Die Frühgeschichte der Langobarden und die Bildung eines Groβstammes der Angeln', *Niedersächsisches Jahrbuch für Land-esgeschichte* LI (1979), pp. 77–136.

9   J. Campbell, *Bede's 'Reges' and 'Principes'* (Jarrow Lecture, 1979).

10 E.g. V. I. Evison, *The Fifth-Century Invasions South of the Thames* (London, 1965).

11 *Nennius*, ed. and trans. J. Morris (London, 1980), p. 64; cf. C. Erdmann, 'Die nichtrömische Kaiseridee', in his *Forschungen zur politischen Ideenwelt des Frühmittelalters* (Berlin, 1951), pp. 9–10.

12 P. H. Sawyer, *From Roman Britain to Norman England* (London, 1978), pp. 86–91.

13 I. Foster, 'The emergence of Wales', in I. Foster and G. Daniel (eds), *Prehistoric and Early Wales* (London, 1965), p. 231; a Welsh edition of this poem by R. Geraint Gruffydd is in R. Bromwich and R. Brindley Jones (eds), *Studies in Old Welsh Poetry* (Cardiff, 1978); I thank Dr Thomas Charles-Edwards for this reference.

14 See now D. Dumville, 'Nennius and the Historia Brittonum', *Studia Celtica* X–XI (1975–6), pp. 78–95; and his 'On the North British section of the Historia Brittonum', *Welsh History Review* VIII (1977), pp. 345–54.

15 P. Salway, *Roman Britain* (Oxford, 1981), map VII.

16 Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum*, ed. G. Waitz, MGH, SRL, III.32, p. 112; Isidore, *De Laude Spaniae*, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH, AAXI, p. 267.

17 C. Stancliffe, 'Kings and conversion', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* XIV (1980), pp. 75–6.

18 H. M. Chadwick, *The Heroic Age* (Cambridge, 1912), p. 34; K. Sisam, 'Anglo-Saxon royal genealogies', *Proceedings of the British Academy* XXXIX (1953), pp. 287–346. It is becoming unfashionable to see Beowulf as even pre-Viking: see most (not all) papers in C. Chase (ed.), *The Dating of Beowulf* (Toronto, 1981). In deference to critics of my paper, 'Bede, Beowulf and the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy', in R. T. Farrell (ed.), *Bede and Anglo-Saxon England* (BAR, XLVI, 1978), pp. 32–95, I would point out that I did not 'assume an eighth-century date of the poem', committing myself only to the dating range 675–875 (pp. 94–5); Chadwick's arguments, scarcely consid-ered in the Toronto volume, are one reason why I am still reluctant to widen it.

19　*Gesetze*, I, pp. 318–19, 344–5, 350–1.

20　J. Campbell, *The Anglo-Saxons* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 240ff.

21　*EHD*, p. 888; text: *King Alfred's West Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care*, ed. H. Sweet (Oxford, 1871–2), pp. 2–3.

22　*Gesetze*, I, pp. 126–7.

23　For Bede's title(s) see n. 94. W. Kienast, *Studien über die französischen Volksstämme des Frühmittelalters* (Stuttgart, 1968); K. Werner, 'Les Nations et le sentiment national dans l'Europe médiévale', *RH* CCXLIV (1970), pp. 285–304.

24　Stenton, *ASE*, pp. 33–6, 202, 206–12. For the views of the earliest scholars see Kemble's passage in next note.

25　J. M. Kemble, *The Saxons in England* (2 vols, London, 1849), II, pp. 8–22; W. Stubbs, *Constitutional History of England* (3 vols, Oxford, 1873–8), I, pp. 162–3; Plummer, II, pp. 200, 205.

26　Erdmann, 'Nichtrömische Kaiseridee'; E. Stengel, 'Kaisertitel und Suveranitätsidee', and 'Imperator und Imperium bei den Angelsachsen', *DA* III (1939), pp. 1–56, XVI (1960), pp. 1–65; R. Drögereit, 'Kaiseridee und Kaisertitel bei den Angelsachsen', *ZRG*, germanistische Abt., LXIX (1952), pp. 24–73. Cf. also H. Löwe, *Die karolingische Reichsgründung und der Südosten* (Stuttgart, 1937), pp. 131ff.; K. Werner, 'Das hochmittelalterliche Imperium', *HZ* CC (1965), pp. 1–60.

27　'The supremacy of the Mercian kings' (1918), cited from Stenton, *Prep. ASE*, p. 48; Stenton, *ASE*, p. 35.

28　E. John, '"Orbis Britanniae" and the Anglo-Saxon kings' in his *Orbis Britanniae and Other Studies* (Leicester, 1966), pp. 1–26; cf. F. Palgrave, *The Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth* (2 vols, London, 1832), I, pp. 562ff. H. Vollrath-Reichelt, *Königsgedanke und Königtum bei den Angelsachsen* (Cologne-Graz, 1971); B. Yorke, 'The vocabulary of Anglo-Saxon overlordship', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History*, II (BAR, XCII, 1981), pp. 171–200.

29　In what follows, I obviously differ in some respect from all scholars so far cited, just as I have been guided by them in others. I have not generally indicated areas of agreement or disagreement, for reasons of space and taste; but I should acknowledge here the debt I owe to Stenton's mighty scholarship, and also a more personal debt to Dr Vollrath-Reichelt, whose gift of her book first set me thinking along these lines.

30　*HE* II.5, p. 89: 'Tertius quidem in regibusgentis Anglorum cunctis australibus eorum provinciis, quae Humbrae fluvio . . . sequestrantur a borealibus, imperavit; sed primus omnium caeli regna conscendit. Name primus imperium huiusmodi Ælli rex Australium Saxonum; secundus Caelin rex Occidentalium Saxonum, qui lingua ipsorum Ceaulin vocabatur; tertius, ut diximus, Ædilberct . . . quartus Reduald rex Orientalium Anglorum, qui etiam vivente Aedilbercto eidem suae genti ducatum praebebat, obtinuit; quintus Aedunini rex Nordanhymbrorum gentis . . . maiore potentia cunctis, qui Brittaniam incolunt, Anglorum pariter et Brettonum populis praefuit, praeter Cantuariis tantum . . . sextus Osuald, et ipse Nordanhymbrorum rex Christianissimus, hisdem finibus regnum tenuit; septimus Osuiu frater eius, aequalibus pene terminis regnum nonnullo tempore cohercens, Pictorum quoque et Scottorum gentes . . . maxima ex parte perdomuit, ac tributarias fecit.' My translation is based on that of B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (eds), *Bede's Ecclesiastical History* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 149–51. But

Vollrath-Reichelt, *Königsgedanke und Königstum*, pp. 80–8, points out that 'praebebat' must mean that Redwald was 'offering', not 'gaining', the *ducatus*. I owe to Dr Brooks the suggestion (which he will defend elsewhere) that Bede means to say that in Æthelbert's lifetime Redwald continued to concede lordship of the East Anglians to him: it fits with *HE* II.15, p. 116. For Bede's other references to the power of these kings and Æthelbald, see *HE* I.25, II.3, 9, 16, III.6, 24, IV.3, V.23, pp. 44–6, 85, 97, 118, 137–8, 180, 206, 350.

31 *ASC, s.a.* 827.

32 S 89. This is the only charter to combine 'South English' with 'British' rule; for other titles with the former element, see S 94, S 101, S 103, S 287, S 291; for Britannia etc., see the (generally dubious) S 52, S 233, S 93, S 1410.

33 John, *Orbis Britanniae*, pp. 7–8, following Erdmann. It is difficult to decide this issue: the agreement of five *Chronicle* MSS on 'Brytenwalda' could possibly arise from a foible of their common archetype. The 736 charter shows that by then 'rule of Britain' was uppermost, but the vernacular translation of a charter of Æthelstan, S 427, seems to use 'Brytenwalda' in this sense! I retain *Bretwalda* here because it is common usage, and because that is what 'rex Britanniae' seems to convey. See now C. Hart, 'The B text of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle', *Journal of Medieval History* VIII (1982), pp. 272–3.

34 Cf. E. A. Thomson, *The Early Germans* (Oxford, 1965), pp. 13–14, 40 and *The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila* (Oxford, 1966), p. 44; H. Wolfram, 'Athanaric the Visigoth', *Journal of Medieval History* I (1975), pp. 257–78.

35 *HE* IV.12, p. 228 (cf. Plummer, I, pp. 368, 390); V.18, 19, pp. 320–1; IV.12, V.18, pp. 228, 320; V.7, p. 294; V.24, p. 354. Aldhelm's usage is similar: compare Geraint, 'Occidentalis regni sceptra gubernanti', *Aldhelmi Opera*, ed. R. Ehwald, MGH, AA XV, pp. 61, 480–1; and cf. ibid., pp. 14–16, 65, 77, 135, 302, 305, 311, 491, etc.

36 Adomnan, *Life of Columba*, ed. and trans. A. O. and M. O. Anderson (London, 1961), I.1, pp. 200–1; F. J. Byrne, *Irish Kings and High Kings* (London, 1973), p. 255.

37 *Die Briefe der heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus*, ed. M. Tangl, MGH, Ep. Sel., I (1916), p. 169; *The Gelasian Sacramentary*, ed. H. Wilson (Oxford, 1894), p. 76.

38 *Briefe Bonifatius*, p. 146; cf. n. 35.

39 Alcuin, *Epistolae*, ed. E. Dümmler, MGH, Ep. IV, pp. 191–2; cf. Alcuin, *Carmina*, ed. E. Dümmler, MGH, Poet, I, p. 172; Alcuin, *Vita Willibrordi*, ed. W. Levison, MGH, SRM VII, pp. 127, 133.

40 Alcuin, *Epistolae*, pp. 241, 292, 310, 331, 226, 279, 397, 402, with pp. 177, 288. For a more convincing interpretation of Alcuin's imperial ideal, see W. Ullmann, *The Caro-lingian Renaissance and the Idea of Kingship* (London, 1969), pp. 135ff.; and for overdue perspective on the whole issue, Professor Bullough's forthcoming study of Alcuin.

41 Isidore, *Etymologiae*, ed. W. M. Lindsay (Oxford, 1911), IX.iii.2–3, 14, Cf., e.g., I Samuel 2:10; I Chronicles 18:3; Judith 1:1, 2:3; Esther 1:3, 20; Daniel 6:26, 9:1; Luke 3:1; and McClure, *Ideal*, p. 88.

42 P. Chaplais, 'The origin and authenticity of the royal Anglo-Saxon diploma', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* III (1965–9), pp. 48–61; N. P. Brooks, 'The Early Charters of Christ Church Canterbury' (Oxford, unpubl. D.Phil. thesis, 1969), pp. 128–92. Cf. H. Wolfram, *Intitulatio, I, MIÖG, Ergänzungsband*, XXI (1967), pp. 18, 20–1; and John, *Orbis Britanniae*, pp. 2–4. Yorke, 'Vocabulary', has a useful table of the relevant titles.

43 S 96; S 116–18; S 121; S 127.

44 S 153; S 155; S157; S 1264; S 168. Two of the forgeries with this style were produced in early ninth-century Kent, as Dr Brooks's forthcoming study shows: S 22; S 90.

45 Compare the 798 charter with Alcuin, *Epistolae*, p. 181 (to King Cenwulf, 797): 'illum semper habeas in mente qui te regnum exaltavit super principes populi sui rectorem'; and S 155 – 'Offa rex et decus Brittaniae' – with Alcuin, *Epistolae*, p. 107 (to Offa): 'vos estis decus Brittaniae . . .'

46 E.g. S 93; S 320; and see n. 48.

47 S 110–11; S 132; S 230; Stenton, 'Supremacy', pp. 60, 62, 64. See *Facsimiles of Ancient Charters in the British Museum*, ed. E. A. Bond (4 vols, London, 1873–8), IV 4, IV 2, III 4; and *Facsimiles of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, ed. W. B. Sanders (3 vols, Southampton, Ordnance Survey, 1878–84), I 3. Cf. W. H. Stevenson, 'Trinoda Necessitas', *EHR* XXIX (1914), p. 692, n. 18.

48 S 108; S 104; S 109; S 145; S 121; S 1178; S 54; S 146; some of these are certainly forged, and others show signs of interpolation.

49 Cf. the table accompanying H. Kleinschmidt, *Untersuchungen über das englische Königtum im 10 Jahrundert* (Göttingen, 1979); and for a hint of Offa's resurrected reputation, *The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. and trans. A. Campbell (London, 1962), p. 24. Patrick Young's transcript of the original of S 109, BL Cotton MS Vitellius C ix, f. 129, is burnt at the crucial point, but the visible descender of the first letter of the word after 'rex' makes it look like an 's', and 'seniorum' follows 'Anglorum' in the cartulary texts. Both texts of S 146 are perhaps suspect in the light of the 'original' S 139, and the only text to give 'Anglorum' is the generally unreliable BL Cotton MS Nero E i: N. R. Ker, 'Hemming's Cartulary', in R. W. Hunt et al., *Studies in Medieval History Presented to F. M. Powicke* (Oxford, 1948), pp. 65–7.

50 Yorke, 'Vocabulary', pp. 181–3. It is possible, but not certain, that a legend on one of Offa's coins can be extended as 'Rex Anglorum': N. P. Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1983), ch. 6, n. 37.

51 Stenton, 'Supremacy', p. 54.

52 *HE* II.3, p. 85.

53 *HE* III.21–2, pp. 169–72.

54 *HE* III.7, p. 139; Eddius, *Life of Wilfrid*, ed. and trans. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, 1927), 40, pp. 80–1; *ASC, s.a.* 718.

55 *ASC, s.a.* 789, 792 (D,E); S 148, and cf. S 149. What are often taken as instances of an overlord's military leadership may also be alliances: one cannot logically cite Æthelbald's campaign, *ASC, s.a.* 743, without citing Ine's, ibid., 710. The same goes for cases of two or more kings in a witness-list: the papal legates' account of their 786 encounter with Offa and Cynewulf of Wessex hardly suggests the latter's inferiority: Alcuin, *Epistolae*, p. 20. Anglo-Saxon equivalents to the Irish *rígdál* may not have been unknown: J. Bannerman, *Studies in the History of Dal Riata* (Edinburgh, 1974), pp. 162–70.

56 S 108; S 1184; S 1178; S 1183.

57 S 1169, with Eddius, *Wilfrid*, 40, pp. 80–1; S 1165, with F. M. Stenton, 'Medeshamstede and its colonies', in Stenton, *prep. ASE*, pp. 181–2. As against Stenton's view that the princes of the Magonsæte were not, as later tradition alleged, descendants of Penda, Stenton, *ASE*, p. 47, see Sawyer, *Roman Britain to Norman England*, p. 39.

58 S 99; S 55; S 57; H. P. R. Finberg, *The Early Charters of the West Midlands* (Leicester, 1961), pp. 167–80; E. Zöllner, 'Die Herkunft der Agilolfinger', *MIÖG* LIX (1951), pp. 245–64.

59 Sawyer, *Roman Britain to Norman England*, pp. 101–2. Note that Æthelbald's remissions of toll for Kentish churches (listed in Campbell, *Anglo-Saxons*, p. 252) show that he was the patron, not necessarily the lord, of Kent. Of the other dynasties: the (probable) king of the East Saxons was still 'rex' in S 168 (811); in S 1791, though Sigeric, minister of King Wiglaf of Mercia, receives the grant, Sigeric, king of the East Saxons, attests it. In his sole appearance on the stage of history, a king of Lindsey is still 'rex' in *c*.791: F. M. Stenton, 'Lindsey and its kings', in Stenton, *CP*, pp. 129–31. To judge from coins, there were no East Anglian kings between the execution of Æthelbert and the death of Ludeca: *ASC, s.a.* 794, 827; C. Blunt et al., 'The coinage of southern England, 796–840', *British Numismatic Journal* XXXII (1963), pp. 25–30.

60 K. Leyser, *Rule and Conflict in an Early Medieval Society* (London, 1979), pp. 110–11.

61 *HE* III.24, p. 180.

62 Blunt, 'Coinage of southern England', p. 34; D. Dumville, 'Kingship, genealogies and regnal lists', in Sawyer and Wood, *Early Medieval Kingship*, p. 100: *ASC, s.a.* 830, S 270 (?833) is highly suspicious in the light of S 23; S 279 (836) is the first Kentish charter of Egbert after 830 that commands respect. On the other hand, cf. S 188, S 190, for Wiglaf, and the coinage evidence: Blunt, 'Coinage of southern England', pp. 15–25, 30–4.

63 Eddius, *Wilfrid*, 20, pp. 42–3.

64 For the text, BCS 297–297B. The literature ranges from W. J. Corbett, 'The Tribal Hidage', *TRHS* NS XIV (1900), pp. 187–230, to W. Davies and H. Vierck, 'The contexts of Tribal Hidage', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* VIII (1974), pp. 223–93. See now Campbell, *Anglo-Saxons*, pp. 59–61.

65 Sawyer, *Roman Britain to Norman England*, pp. 110–13; R. H. Hodgkin, *A History of the Anglo-Saxons* (2 vols, 3rd edn, Oxford, 1952), II, p. 389; N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957), no. 239.

66 *HE* II.2, p. 81: 'adiutorio usus Aedilbercti regis'.

67 *HE* III.7, p. 141; F. M. Stenton, *The Early History of the Abbey of Abingdon* (Oxford, 1913), pp. 21–9; H. P. R. Finberg, *The Early Charters of Wessex* (Leicester, 1964), p. 218; Sawyer, *Roman Britain to Norman England*, p. 100. Cf. also S 1679, S 1692, S 152.

68 S 65 is no exception: 'cum licentia Aedelredi regis' refers to the status of Paeogthath 'comis', not that of 'Sueabraed rex Eastsaxanorum'.

69 *HE* IV.26, p. 268; S 12; S 52; S 58; S 1183.

70 E.g. S 75; S 89; S 113.

71 S 155: 'sed harum post modum possessiones terrarum Offa rex et decus Brittaniae inmutavit suisque distribuit ministris dicens iniustum fuisse quod minister eius praesumsisset terram sibi a domino distributam absque eius testimonio in alterius potestatem dare'; trans. *EHD*, p. 511; cf. Stenton, *ASE*, p. 36, and Vollrath-Reichelt, *Königsgedanke und Königtum*, pp. 163–71. 'Harum . . . possessiones terrarum' (plural) favours Stenton's interpretation, in that the phrase seems to refer to all of Egbert's gifts as well as Aldhun's; but 'terram . . . distributam' supports the opposition, because it is hard to see how Offa can have thought that he had endowed Egbert. A later charter, saying that Offa behaved

'quasi non liceret Ecgberhto agros hereditario iure scribere' may reinforce Stenton's case, but it also shows that Canterbury denied Offa's rights: S 1264, and cf. S 1259.

72   S 1257: 'Aiebat enim nos sine iure hereditario propinqui eius Aethelbaldi scilicet regis hereditatem sub dominio iniusto habere'; trans. *EHD*, p. 506. Cf. S 89, S 1411.

73   Offa's treatment of Rochester property is instructive: S 32–3 are grants by Sigired, 'rex dimidiae partis provinciae Cantuariorum', and presumably another 'outsider' (cf. n. 69); in S 105, Offa, replacing Sigired as Heahbert's associate, renews one of these grants immediately, but he did not renew the other until 789: S 131. Similarly, S 130 ultimately renews two grants by Egbert (S 35–6). What Offa could re-grant in his own good time he could also keep.

74   Other examples of Offa's behaviour: S 149; S 1258; S 1435. Egbert of Wessex seems to have been equally ruthless: S 1438.

75   Hodgkin, *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, p. 420 – a perceptive and neglected passage; S 34: Offa's Peterborough confirmation could have come at any date up to 772, when the next bishop of Rochester attested S 108. Cf. earlier Kentish ratifications: S 10; S 233.

76   S 46; S 50; S 49; S 1184; S 1183: later confirmation is either explicit or implied by its position on the witness-list. Exceptions: S 108, a grant in the Domesday rape of Hastings a year after Offa had overrun the 'gens Haestingorum' (*HR, s.a.* 771); and S 1178, when the native dynasty were already 'dukes'.

77   S 265; S 1257. Of the East Saxon charters, S 1785 shows only that kings of Mercia and Essex each consented to a grant (cf. n. 55); and S 65, though in early script, is not 'original', because the consent of successive Mercian kings is recorded in the same hand: the order of witnesses could have been rearranged, and Mercian recognition might be retrospective.

78   *ASC, s.a.* 798; *HR, s.a.* 798; Alcuin, *Epistolae*, pp. 188–92; Blunt, 'Coinage of southern England', p. 26. For the loss of the archives, see Brooks, thesis (as n. 42), pp. 4–26.

79   *HE* III.11, p. 148; the difference in atmosphere in Sussex, *HE* IV.14, pp. 233–5, is explained by the commitment of its apostle, Wilfrid, to Oswald's cult: D. P. Kirby, 'Bede's native sources', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* XLVIII (1966), p. 350.

80   *HE* IV.21–2, pp. 249–51; *Beowulf*, ed. F. Klaeber (3rd edn, London, 1950), II. 2009–69 (and also II. 2999–3027).

81   Hence one of the attractions of the 'Nennius' hypothesis' (above, pp. 107–8). Vollrath-Reichelt's solution relies, for Egbert, on unacceptable charters (pp. 187–91), and her evidence on other kings is as well explained by the solution adopted here.

82   Stenton, 'Supremacy', pp. 48–9; Stenton, *ASE*, p. 34.

83   Byrne, *Irish Kings*, pp. 254–9.

84   Asser, *Life of Alfred*, ed. W. H. Stevenson (Oxford, reprint 1959), 14–15, pp. 12–14.

85   Above, nn. 32, 44.

86   Above, n. 30. *HE* pr., pp. 6–7, can be read as implying what one would anyway expect, that most of Bede's information on episcopal successions came from Canterbury; thus the news of Æthelbald's power, which he records in such a context, may also have come from Albinus and Nothelm (cf. McClure, *Ideal*, pp. 92–3). Yorke, 'Vocabulary', pp. 195–6, also argues that Bede's list was second-hand; and cf. Thacker, *Ideal*, pp. 146–8.

87　Cf. Leyser, *Rule and Conflict*, pp. 28–31, for a most interesting anthropological insight into how a struggle for supremacy within a political system contributes to the system's coherence; but Leyser brings out the fragility of such a structure: above, n. 60.

88　J. B. Gillingham, *The Kingdom of Germany in the High Middle Ages* (London, Historical Association, 1971), p. 3.

89　Above, n. 18. For 'individualist' exiles and adventurers among the early Anglo-Saxons, see now Campbell, *Anglo-Saxons*, pp. 54–6. Bede envisaged Northumbrian warriors seeking better rewards 'trans mare', Plummer, I, p. 415.

90　*ASC, s.a.* 1051–2, and Whitelock's introduction to her 1961 edn, pp. xiv–xvi. H. Loyn, 'The king and the structure of society in later Anglo-Saxon England', *History* XLII (1957), pp. 87–100.

91　D. Whitelock, 'Some charters in the name of King Alfred', in M. King and W. Stevens (eds), *Saints, Scholars and Heroes: Studies in Honor of C. W. Jones* (Collegeville, Minn., 1979), pp. 77–98. The famous and unique Alfredian coin whose legend is normally expanded as 'Rex Anglorum' could also have included a 'Saxon' element: R. H. M. Dolley (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon Coins* (London, 1961), p. 81.

92　*De Temporibus*, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH, AA XIII, pp. 304, 309.

93　*Explicatio Apocalypsis*, PL XCIII, c. 134; *Retractatio in Actus Apostolorum*, ed. M. Laistner (Cambridge, Mass., 1939), p. 100.

94　*HE* pr. (Albinus), pr. (Ceolwulf), V.24, pp. 3, 5, 356–7, 359; I.14, 15, 20, 22, III.7, 22, IV.14, V.9, pp. 30, 31, 38, 42, 140, 173, 233, 296, and cf. below, n. 105. In *HE* III.19, p. 167, Bede neatly substitutes 'Angles' for the 'Saxons' of the continental original: *Vita Fursei*, ed. B. Krusch, MGH, SRM IV, p. 437.

95　*HE* IV.2, p. 204.

96　Alcuin, *Epistolae*, pp. 147, 125, 192. It is possible that the circulation of Alcuin's letters to Offa inspired the 'rex Anglorum' titles perhaps subsequently attributed to him (above, n. 49). But I should not regard Alcuin's usage as evidence that Offa himself used the title: 'rex Anglorum' could mean, in effect, 'English king', as Sawyer points out, *Roman Britain to Norman England*, p. 107.

97　S 153, cf. N. Brooks, 'England in the ninth century', *TRHS*, 5th ser., XXIX (1979), p. 13, n. 52; pp. 579, 583.

98　S 148; S 190; S 287; S 1436; *Councils*, III, p. 52.

99　We should not know from *Liber Historiae Francorum* that Balthildis was an insular 'Saxon', but for what is said in her own *Vita*: ed. B. Krush, MGH, SRM II (1888), pp. 315, 483. For 'Anglo-Saxon' cf. W. Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (Oxford, 1946), pp. 92–3, and *Artemis Lexikon des Mittelalters*, I (1981), s.v. 'Angelsachsen'.

100　Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH, SRG, 25, p. 30; Notker, *De Gestis Karoli Magni*, ed. H. Haefele, MGH, SRG, 2, p. 3.

101　*Briefe Bonifatius*, pp. 74–5, 150–1, 156, 169, 171.

102　*Vit. Wilf.* 6, 11, 41, pp. 14–15, 22–3, 82–3.

103　*The Earliest Life of Gregory the Great*, ed. and trans. B. Colgrave (Lawrence, Kans., 1968), 6, 12, pp. 82–3, 94–5.

104   *Aldhelmi Opera*, pp. 14–16, 498, 390, 202; *Gesetze*, I, pp. 100–1, 110–11, 114–15, 120–1: Alfred probably did not change the text of Ine's code, but it may well have been adjusted between Ine's time and his.

105   *HE* IV.17, p. 239, and V.8, pp. 295–6, may each reflect Theodore's usage; cf. W. M. Lindsay, *The Corpus, Epinal, Erfurt and Leyden Glosses* (Oxford, 1921), pp. 81–2.

106   *Briefe Bonifatius*, p. 158; M. Lapidge and M. Herren, *Aldhelm, the Prose Works* (Ipswich, 1979), pp. 2, 179 n. 9.

107   *Liber Historiae Francorum*, 2, pp. 242–3; Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* I.8, p. 52; *HE* II.1, pp. 79–80; *Life of Gregory*, 9, pp. 90–1.

108   Procopius, *History of the Wars*, ed. and trans. H. B. Dewing (Loeb series, 1928), VIII.20, pp. V, 252–5: he associates the Angles and the Frisians – perhaps, as Chadwick suggested, confusing the latter with Saxons.

109   *Gregorii Registrum*, ed. P. Ewald and L. Hartmann, MGH, Ep. I, II, pp. 1,389, 423, II, pp. 30–1, 199, 304, 305–6, 308–10, 312, 315, 319–20, 331, 333, 334, 336, 338; and the pope's epitaph, p. 470, and notice in the *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. L. Duchesne (2 vols, Paris, 1886–92), I, p. 312.

110   One cannot say much about the usage of Gregory's successors, for want of badly needed research on *Papsturkunden* in pre-Conquest England. To judge from reliable sources, Rome continued to think of 'Britannia' and the 'gens Anglorum': *HE* II.10, 17, pp. 100, 119; *Liber Pontificalis*, pp. I, 376, II, 53, 161–2. Where they did not, this was either strictly accurate (*HE* V.7, p. 293), or, one suspects, because 'Saxon' long remained continental usage (*HE* III.29, p. 196; *Liber Pontificalis*, p. I, 391).

111   Most recently, M. Gibson, *Lanfranc of Bec* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 231–7. The last word has yet to be said: Brooks, thesis (as n. 42), pp. 96–102, 315–16.

112   *HE* IV.17, p. 239; *Councils*, III, p. 203; *Gesetze*, I, p. 12; *BCS* 115.

113   *Councils*, III, p. 552; *BCS* 310; M. Richter (ed.), *Canterbury Professions* (London, Canterbury and York Society, LXVII, 1972–3), 9, p. 9; S 1436.

114   *Councils*, III, p. 368. For the Coronation *Ordo*'s lively history see C. Hohler, 'Some service books of the later Saxon Church', in D. Parsons (ed.), *Tenth Century Studies* (London, 1975), pp. 67–9. Hincmar's prayer is *MGH, Capit.* II, p. 456, and the English version is ed. P. Ward, *EHR* LVII (1942), p. 356. I was guided through this minefield by Dr Janet Nelson, and a forthcoming article by her and Dr Pauline Stafford should solve many remaining problems.

115   Aldhelm studied there: *Opera*, pp. 478, 492–3; Eddius came from Kent: *HE* IV.2, p. 205; Whitby preserved Canterbury traditions: *Life of Gregory*, pp. 37, 53. Most of this was perceived by Wallace-Hadrill, *EMH*, pp. 115–16.

116   We may thus account for the British element in *HE*, rightly stressed by J. Stephens, 'Bede's Ecclesiastical History', *History* LXII (1977), pp. 1–14, without supposing that it is anything less than an 'Ecclesiastical History of the English'; McClure, *Ideal*, p. 93.

117   *HE* III.25, IV.5, 17, pp. 183, 214–15, 239. Whitby was not an all-English affair, called by Oswiu in his capacity as *Bretwalda*; bishop Agilbert of the West Saxons was an exile, bishop Cedd of the East Saxons was a member of the Northumbrian Church, and, even if we accept that there were vacancies at Canterbury and in Mercia at this point, we must still explain the absence of bishop Boniface of the East Angles: *HE* III.7, 20, 21–3, IV.5, pp. 140, 169, 170–7, 217. Wulfhere, if anyone, was *Bretwalda* by this time

(above, n. 61); and the same difficulty arises with the more widely accepted view that Oswiu helped to choose the archbishop of Canterbury after 664, despite *HE* III.29, p. 196. See an important note by J. Campbell, 'Bede', in T. A. Dorey (ed.), *Latin Historians* (London, 1966), p. 187, n. 30.

118 The following charters are attested by an approximate complement of southern bishops: S 1257 (781); S 123 (785); S 125 (786); S 129 (788); S 136 (793 – a rank forgery, but the episcopal element in the witness-list seems sound); S 137 (794); S 153 (798); S 155 (799); S 106 + 158 (801); S 1260 + 1431 (803); S 161 (805); S 180 (816); S 1433–4 (824); S 1435–7 (825); S 190 (836). S 1438 (838–9) implies full episcopal attendance on the West Saxon kings, but the witness-lists contradict this; West Saxon ascendancy ended the system that served Canterbury so well. Legislation is extant for the councils of 803 (*BCS* 310, 312) and 816 (Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, III, pp. 579–85); also, if the meetings are the same, for that of 786: Alcuin, *Epistolae*, pp. 19–29.

119 R. W. Southern, *Saint Anselm and his Biographer* (Cambridge, 1961), pp. 128–9; Hugh the Chanter, *History of the Church of York*, ed. C. Johnson (London, 1961), p. 3.

120 John Milton, *The History of Britain before the Norman Conquest* (London, 1671), reprinted in *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, V (New Haven, 1971), p. 1.

Additional Note

Several of the issues addressed in this paper recur below, especially in chapter 6, and are better resumed in its Additional Note (pp. 223–28). However, this is the right place for retraction (even if not retraction) on some.

1 The most important concerns the very word 'Bretwalda'. The word is used only by the 'A' or 'Parker' version of the 'Anglo-Saxon Chronicle'; all other versions offer 'Brytenwalda' (or the like). Although 'A' is the only manuscript contemporary with all stages of its composition, including its late ninth-century origin, it was always accepted that 'Bryten-walda' ought to represent the archetypal form (above, pp. 110); the reason why *Bretwalda* was persistently preferred is that it was taken to mean 'Britain-ruler', whereas 'Bryten-walda' was understood as 'wide-ruler', and the currency of a 'Britain-rule' notion a century and a half before the 'Chronicle' was written is attested by the Ismere Diploma of 736. In 1984, Professor Dumville at last drew attention to a point that we really should not need to be as learned as he to have seen: in the 'A' scribe's 'Bretwalda', the letter 'd' is inserted. Not the most careful of scribes, he had thought he was writing 'Bretwala', i.e. 'Briton'/ 'Welshman': inserting 'd' was a hasty acknowledgement that he had mistranscribed and perhaps abbreviated 'Brytenwalda' (D. N. Dumville, 'The terminology of overkingship in early Anglo-Saxon England', in J. Hines (ed.), The Anglo-Saxons from the Migration period to the Eighth Century (Woodbridge: 1997), pp. 345–65). That the word should have taken this form on its sole appearance before our eyes strongly suggests that it never really existed at all. So we are left with 'Brytenwalda'. But this is no warrant for the 'wide-ruler' interpretation. T. M. Charles-Edwards shows ('The "Continuation of Bede", *s.a.* 750: high-kings, kings of Tara, and "Bretwaldas"', in A. P. Smyth (ed.), *Seanchas: Studies in Early and Medieval Irish Archaeology, History and Literature in Honour of Francis J. Byrne* (Dublin, 2000), pp. 137–45, at pp. 144–5) that the meaning 'wide' for '*bryten*' is most

improbable linguistically; and if poetic compounds where *bryten* has an apparent sense of 'wide' might indicate a sort of 'dispersal' ('*gebrytan* = break up'), dispersal, however appropriate for a ruler's power, will scarcely do for a ruler himself. OE for 'wide' was 'brad', 'bred', 'bræd', as would be expected from modern English 'broad'. By no stretch of philological imagination could long or diphthongized 'a', 'e' become 'y'. Happily, this conundrum has a simple answer: 'Brytenwalda' itself means 'Britain-ruler'! Unlike *Bretwalda*, it recurs elsewhere, in an otherwise questionable charter of Æthelstan for Winchester, rendering Latin 'rex et rector totius huius Britanniae insulae' by OE 'brytænwalda eallæs ðyses Iglandes' (S 427). This removes our one remaining justification for ever having preferred *Bretwalda*. It is an altogether sobering index of the intellectual inertia that comes over scholars when cherished historical models are involved.

2   But if we must dispense with the *word* 'Bretwalda', should we also jettison the associated baggage of a primal if shadowy notion of an (over-)kingship of 'Britain', an early Southumbrian 'imperium' such as Bede describes? At least two noted scholars think so: Professor Keynes, 'Rædwald the Bretwalda', in C. B. Kendall and P. S. Wells (eds), *Voyage to the Other World: the Legacy of Sutton Hoo* (Minneapolis, Mich., 1992), pp. 103–23, at p. 109, 'the list of seven kings is far more likely to be the product of personal reflection on Bede's part'; and Dr Sarah Foot, 'The Making of *Angelcynn*: English Identity before the Norman Conquest', *TRHS* 6th ser. 6 (1996), pp. 25–49, at p. 40: 'there may be a case for attributing its construction to Bede himself'. To these, I incline to reply that, had Bede wished 'to include heroes of the pre-Christian past' – not exactly among his major interests – he would surely have picked his own Northumbrian king, Æthelfrith, to whose unprecedented victories he devoted a chapter (i 34, pp. 71–2), rather than the otherwise unmentioned Ælle and Ceawlin. I am struck by his ability to give Anglian (or Kentish) as well as West Saxon forms of Ceawlin's name, implying that his status *was* somehow acknowledged by others than West Saxons. I still prefer, therefore, to see 'Britain-rule' as a counterpart to 'kingship of Tara/Ireland', an ancient notion seldom if ever uncontested, which makes good sense of the fact that something like what Bede describes is attested a quarter-century earlier by the Irish Abbot Adomnan, writing of the outcome of Oswald's victory at Heavenfield (above, pp. 116–17). In fact, it now seems to me likelier than it did two decades ago that, whatever came to be made of them by Bede and his authorities, 'Britain-rulers' were in origin Anglo-Saxo-Jutish versions of that temporary leadership against a common enemy – in this case of course the Britons – which Bede himself attests for the Old Saxons (v 10, pp. 299–300), and which is otherwise manifested in early Germanic history: above, p. 111, n. 34, with my 'Kings and Kingship' in P. Fouracre (ed.), *The New Cambridge Modern History. I, c. 500–c. 700*, (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 571–603: it is to be expected that holders of this role would aim to make it permanent, peoples subjected by them to keep it temporary.

3   Questions concerning the genesis of a concept of 'Gens Anglorum' come up again in chapter 6 and its Additional Note. It remains here to reconsider the 'imperium' itself. N. J. Higham has resurrected the case for a pan-British conception of 'empire' derived in some sense from Britons themselves (cf. n. 11), *An English Empire: Bede and the Early Anglo-Saxon Kings* (Manchester, 1995), esp. ch. 2 (cf. his *The English Conquest: Gildas and Britain in the Fifth Century* (Manchester, 1994), pp. 182–6, 193), but I do not envisage Bede's 'rhetorical strategy' quite as Professor Higham does. There has also been

further debate as to just what Bede was saying about the relationship of Æthelberht and Rædwald in his famous 'imperial' passage: see, in particular, Professor Charles-Edwards's *Addenda* to Wallace-Hadrill, *Eccl. Hist. Comm.*, pp. 220–2, whose interpretation I unhesitatingly accept – not least because it supports (a) the above suggestion that the 'imperium' once represented military leadership (*ducatus*) of a provisional confederacy, and (b) the proposition that underlings were apt to challenge it when strong enough themselves. In the same connection, I should myself have noted (nn. 48, 96) the recurrent Canterbury presence in the dubious 'rex Anglorum' charters of Offa (including, notably, the otherwise reputable S 108, for Selsey); the point gains new force from Donald Bullough's detailed re-examination of Canterbury's role in transmitting the relevant Alcuin letters, *Alcuin: Achievement and Reputation* (Leiden, 2004), pp. 81–101, esp. pp. 85–7. Meanwhile, Professor Bullough was turning his unrivalled powers on the supposed transmission of a 'Germanic' concept of empire from early Britain via Alcuin to Charlemagne (cf. n. 26). His views (as was all too often the case) were not easy to access in print, but some of his thinking may be distilled from 'Die Kaiseridee zwischen Antike und Mittelalter', in C. Stieghoff and M. Wemhoff (eds), *Kunst und Kultur der Karolingerzeit. Beiträge zum Katalog der Ausstellung Paderborn 1999* (Mainz, 2000), pp. 36–46, esp. pp. 45–6, and from his posthumously published 'Three "Men of God" in Charlemagne's "Men of God": Alcuin, Hildebald and Arn', in J. Story (ed.), *Charlemagne: Empire and Society* (Manchester, 2005), pp. 136–50, at pp. 136–42. Meanwhile too, a field where one had thought there could be nothing left to say has been enriched with fresh suggestions by H. Mayr-Harting, 'Charlemagne, the Saxons, and the Imperial Coronation of 800', *EHR* CXI (1996), pp. 1113–33; and, less immediately pertinent here if no less arrestingly, W. Brandes, '*Tempora periculosa sunt*: Eschatologisches im Vorfeld der Kaiserkrönung Karls des Grossen', in R. Berndt (ed), *Das Frankfurter Konzil von 794. Kristallisationspunkt Karolingischer Kultur* (2 vols, Mainz, 1997) I, pp. 49–79.

4   As regards the actual power of overlords, Professor James Campbell, whose unease with my restricted view of the possibilities is evident in his *Anglo-Saxon State,* pp. 53–4, 59–60, states his case more assertively in 'The United Kingdom of England: The Anglo-Saxon Achievement', in A. Grant and K. J. Stringer (eds), *Uniting the Kingdom? The Making of British History* (London, 1995), pp. 31–47, at pp. 41–3 (reprinted in *Anglo-Saxon State*, pp. 31–53, at pp. 43–6). I agree, to a greater extent than in 1981x3, that one does not *have* to be sceptical about overlordly powers, in that he has himself taught me to be more sanguine (*mot plus juste que* 'optimist'!), about what prehistoric, that is preliterate, government could manage. However, I still stand by the distinction in the text above, pp. 114–15: to say that early rulers may have exercised a truly frightening *power* is one thing; to say that powerful kings had *powers*, i.e., what a later age would call *prerogatives*, is quite another. *Brytenwalda* was, we agree, a *title*; that a *Brytenwalda* was *entitled* to do what he did is neither provable nor even plausible. The key factor in the *right*, as opposed to the *capacity*, to exercise power is the at least tacit consent of those over whom it is exercised. In that sense, 'Kings of England' in the tenth century were just that; but they were not, as they also claimed, 'rulers of the whole island of Britain, orb of Albion', etc., because the Scots and Welsh had other ideas (and, to a degree, still do). My view now is roughly that Oswald and Oswiu were 'Britain-rulers', holders of an 'empire', British or Southumbrian, in the same sort of sense as Æthelstan, Edgar, Henries I and II or Edward

I were rulers of *Britain*, but not in the sense that these were kings of the English. And whatever else they did, these latter rulers patently did not advance the unity of the 'orbis Britanniae'.

5   At the turn of the last century's final decade, the early English political scene in general was considerably further illuminated by three books: S. Bassett (ed.), *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms* (Leicester, 1989) (reviewed by me, *Oxoniensia* LIV (1989), pp. 420–2), in which Professors Charles-Edwards, 'Early Medieval Kingships in the British Isles', pp. 28–39, and Dumville, 'The Tribal Hidage: an introduction to its texts and their history', pp. 225–30, made notable contributions on the mechanics of tribute collection and its relation, if any, to the 'Tribal Hidage'; B. Yorke, *Kings and Kingdoms of Early Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1990), esp. pp. 157–62; and D. P. Kirby, *The Earliest English Kings* (London, 2nd edn, 2001), esp. pp. 14–20, 129–36. The overall import of these books is to play down the extent to which (borrowing Dr Bassett's evocative image) early English politics amounted to a knock-out competition, in which, when lesser kingdoms had been eliminated in earlier rounds (or ruled out by Vikings), Wessex was finally able to beat Mercia in a ninth-century Final and lift the Cup. In its place, Professor Simon Keynes has been building a new model, whereby the 'Mercian Supremacy' of the eighth century was vitiated by, on the one hand, unwisely assertive dominance in Kent and elsewhere, and on the other, an outmoded political and administrative structure; so leaving the more streamlined and cohesive Wessex to exercise more effective supremacy: 'The Control of Kent in the Ninth Century', *EME* 2 (1993), pp. 111–31; 'Mercia and Wessex in the Ninth Century', in M. P. Brown and C. A. Farr (eds), *Mercia: an Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe* (London, 2001), pp. 310–29; 'The Kingdom of Mercia in the Eighth Century', in D. Hill and M. Worthington (eds), *Æthelbald and Offa: Two Eighth-Century Kings of Mercia* (British Archaeological Reports, British Series 383, Oxford, 2005), pp. 1–23. This is not the place to debate the issues further. But my current view, reflected in 'Die frühesten englische Könige', in N. Fryde and H. Vollrath (eds), *Die englischen Könige des Mittelalters* (Cologne, 2004), pp. 11–40, differs (roughly) as follows: (a) I take Mercia's Southumbrian dominance to extend as far back as Wulfhere's time, even Penda's, so that Æthelbald's power was not in essence greater than theirs; (b) I see Offa's reign as representing real change, as regards both administrative practice and ideological theory, each borrowing much from the early Carolingians; (c) Cenwulf's powers were, in my view, to all intents and purposes the same as Offa's, but Mercian dominance was then undermined, like that of most early medieval realms (England in 1066 among them), not by arthritic government but by a fractured dynasty; (d) West Saxon governance, which I suppose to have long been more relaxed than Mercia's, learned from not only Frankish expedients but Mercian mistakes, in respecting the status of local aristocracies on the one hand, and in maintaining dynastic cohesion on the other – and probably benefiting too from the effect on trade-routes of Viking piracy in the Narrow Seas, channelling continental commerce westward; (e) Mercia nevertheless was as much rival as ally of Wessex until at least 877, perhaps 879 (T. M. Charles-Edwards, 'Wales and Mercia, 613–918', in Brown and Farr (eds), *Mercia*, pp. 89–105, at pp. 100–2).

4

Bede and the Conversion of England: The Charter Evidence

F or well over two millennia, European scholars have politely begun their professional performances by describing themselves as both flattered and unworthy to undertake the task entrusted to them. Such sentiments are wonderfully concentrated by the experience of lecturing in this holy and beautiful place from within a few yards of where Bede once preached upon matters which he undoubtedly considered more important than himself, or indeed his world. They are further intensified in my case by the reflection that I am the first Jarrow lecturer to introduce the subject of charters into the series. This is not surprising; it has, after all, been commonly believed that there are no genuine Northumbrian charters from Bede's age or long afterwards; moreover, and more important, the study of charters has something less than the appeal of the Ruthwell Cross, the *Codex Amiatinus*, the architecture of this very church or the writings of Bede himself and his mentors. Nevertheless, there are three reasons why charters deserve at least one Jarrow lecture.

In the first place, I have been engaged with like-minded friends for some five years now on research into the early medieval European charter, and we hope to convince others, as we have convinced ourselves, that charter-study is not without its charms.[1] Secondly, a major and inadequately acknowledged paradox of early Anglo-Saxon history is that, while our best narrative evidence comes from the North, our reliable documentary evidence, the laws and charters, is confined to the South. We have to extrapolate from one to the other – in both directions – if we are to achieve a comprehensive understanding of early English society (always remembering that, then as now, northern and southern Englishmen have been known to hold differing views about this world and the next). One might add here that, although there may be no surviving Northumbrian charters from the early period, Bede, as we shall see, provides some of the critical evidence of their existence.[2] Thirdly, perhaps the most immediate social result of the conversion of the English was massive landed investment in the Church. Like it or not – and Bede had mixed views on the subject – a persistent theme of Christian history has been the rendering to God of the things

that are Caesar's. Churchmen needed land to work, rest and pray; they needed it on terms that were both exclusive and permanent. Professor Bruce-Mitford's Jarrow lecture of seventeen years ago established the startling statistic that, in order to make the *Codex Amiatinus* and its sister bibles, the monks of Monkwearmouth and Jarrow needed the hides of 1,550 calves. The Church's landed wealth was a necessary, if not sufficient, condition of the Northumbrian Renaissance. And it is a fair guess that the social consequences of the endowment of monasteries in the seventh and eighth centuries were comparable with those of their dissolution nine hundred years later. The period that concerns me here is that between the birth of Bede in 673 (almost exactly that of the earliest trustworthy charters) and the deaths of the last kings whom Bede is known or likely to have registered: Æthelbert II of Kent (d. 762), Æthelbald of Mercia (d. 757) and Cuthred of Wessex (d. 756). In this period, charters were instruments of ecclesiastical endowment. They are the best evidence of that process, and evidence of much else besides.[3]

But the study of early Anglo-Saxon charters is as complex as it is important. It is also as controversial as it is complex. More than once, it has been acidly declared no business of greyer and wiser heads than mine.[4] Let me begin by discussing the general problems with specific reference to one charter, the oldest to survive as originally written and issued, or, in the parlance of the subject, the oldest 'original' (Plate 4.1).[5] It is a record, dated 679, of a grant of land in Thanet and elsewhere by King Hlothhere of Kent to Abbot Berhtwald of Reculver, the future archbishop of Canterbury (693–731). The first point to make about it is how rare such 'originals' are. There are at most ten from my ninety-year period, and at least two which, while copied within the period, are probably not 'originals'. As against this dozen contemporary or near-contemporary texts, there are, on my reckoning, ninety-five other charters which may be considered more or less reliable versions of original documents, but which were copied at significantly later dates. A few survive, like Hlothhere's charter, on single sheets of parchment. Very many more were preserved only in cartularies, collections of charters arranged in chronological or geographical series by the scribes of churches which considered themselves the ultimate beneficiaries of the record in question. Indeed, even the 'originals', the early copies and the single-sheets of demonstrably later date owe their survival to the archivists of medieval churches, the vast majority, for our period, to those of Canterbury cathedral. In 679, we are still over four hundred years away from the date of the first document both made and preserved by the government itself: Domesday Book. The bureaucratic instincts of early medieval administrations, inasmuch as they existed, have left no traces in the extant records of northern Europe. It was churches that fossilized the evidence of government grants and judgements, usually because they were thought directly or indirectly in that church's interest. In the circumstances, it is only too obvious that our documents are liable to have been doctored, if not fabricated, to the depository's advantage. Such suspicions arise even with what look like 'originals'; they become acute when, as in nearly 90 per cent of our cases, we

Plate 4.1. King Hlothhere of Kent for Abbot Berhtwald of Reculver, May 679 (S 8; British Library Cotton MS Augustus II 2). Note the uncial script and the different ink of the witness-list. © British Library, London.

have only later medieval cartulary copies, making no pretence of resembling what might once have been issued.

We thus encounter what has usually been the central concern of charter-studies, the question of authenticity. The historical science of Diplomatic – diploma being the normal term for a royal or papal charter – is largely devoted to sifting the genuine wheat among charters from the tares planted by later (often highly skilled) inventors.[6] It developed from the determination of seventeenth-century monks at Saint-Denis, near Paris, and elsewhere, led by Jean Mabillon, to prove against sceptics that their early records were genuine.[7] Their efforts in part backfired: Saint-Denis had many forgeries. But they successfully authenticated many documents, and, in the process, established a method which has been standard ever since. Diplomatic research has two main aspects. First, let us suppose that Hlothhere's charter was preserved only in a much later cartulary (as, in fact, it also is). One would then have to ascertain whether what it said and the way it said it – in diplomatic jargon, its formulae – corresponded with those of other demonstrably authentic documents of the period. Second, when confronted with a single-sheet like this, one would seek to demonstrate, at least that its script was that of the period of its purported origin, and preferably that it bore official marks of authentication: a seal that was not itself forged; the personal signatures of the king, his agent and the witnesses;[8] at a minimum, their autograph *signa* or crosses (X – his mark).

The value of beginning with this charter is the paradox that, if it were only an English cartulary copy, it would easily pass the formulaic test; but, if it were a single-sheet anywhere else than in England it would be accounted a copy, if not worse. To take the formulae first: they recur regularly in other early Kentish charters, and it is worth running through them to show what an Anglo-Saxon charter normally involves. First, there is the 'Invocation': pictorially a cross, and verbally an appeal to 'the name of our Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour', which is not only the norm for early English charters, but also one used by Pope Gregory, founder of the Kentish Church, and one which, as a loyal Byzantine subject well-known in Constantinople, he probably borrowed from the legislation of the Emperor Justinian.[9] Then there is the gift itself (the '*dispositio*'), made from the first person ('*Ego Hlotharius rex Cantuariorum*') to the second ('*tibi Bercuald tuoque monasterio*') with its location and all the fields, pastures, marshes, woods, springs and fisheries appurtenant to it (the 'pertinence formula'). There follows a reference to the 'very well-known boundaries marked out by me and my officials', and it should be noted, for reasons we shall see, that, while a certain vagueness in the 'boundary-clause' is a feature of all early English charters, especially in Kent, it is normal to refer at least to neighbouring properties, natural features or the cardinal points of the compass. All, as it was possessed before, is to be held, possessed and defended '*in perpetuum*' by Abbot Berhtwald and his successors, and to be contradicted by none (the 'non-interference' clause); Archbishop Theodore, Eadric, the king's nephew, and 'all chief men' have consented. We are then told that excommunication and the spiritual disgrace –

though nothing more immediately drastic – threatens those who 'try to come against this gift' (the '*sanctio*' or penalty clause); that the charter anyway retains its '*firmitas*'; and, 'for its confirmation, I have expressed the sign (*signum*) of the holy cross with my own hand and asked witnesses that they subscribe' (the '*corroboratio*' or '*rogatio*' clause). This was 'done' at Reculver in May of what amounts to 679 (though the date, as was usual in early English charters, was given not AD but as an 'indiction'[10]). There is then the abnormal feature that the king announces another grant in similar terms on the same day, which need not concern us except that it is the king and his kinsmen who are threatened with damnation at the Last Judgement for 'contradiction', as if it were they who posed the most immediate danger. Finally, we find the names of Hlothhere himself ('*regis donatoris*') and of eleven witnesses (all obscure and apparently laymen), each preceded by a cross and the words '*signum manus*'.

There is, as I say, nothing suspicious here. What presents problems is the appearance of the document. There are none of the marks of authentication that a continental diplomatist would seek. There is no seal. Not only the names of the witnesses but also the crosses preceding them are in the same hand, probably that of the charter itself: they are not 'X – his mark'. The continental expert, for reasons we shall soon see, would conclude that this was a skilled and (for that reason) probably fraudulent copy. But he would then have to conclude as much for every single other extant Anglo-Saxon charter in ostensibly 'original' form. No sealed document survives until the time of Edward the Confessor. Text, subscriptions and even *signa* are nearly always the work of one scribe. This brings us to the two special problems of Anglo-Saxon diplomatic. The first, appropriately Orwellian for the 1984 Jarrow lecture, is that words do not mean what they say. A manual sign, whatever a king or witnesses claim, is nothing of the sort. Even charters from the sub-kingdom of the Hwicce, where every subscription tends to be explicitly personal ('*Ego...consensi et subscripsi*') are by a single hand throughout.[11] And whereas the normal pattern elsewhere is that churchmen (and often kings) use a 'personal' formula, while non-royal laymen have merely '*signum manus*', there are never compelling reasons for regarding either as autograph. The second special problem is that of proving any charter 'original', in the absence of all authenticating features. One can assess the date of the script, but the limitations of this method are well illustrated by Hlothhere's charter, which has been thought a later *copy* on palaeographical grounds.[12] Only one thing shows that our charter is an 'original': though its attestations are almost certainly in the main hand, they were evidently written on a different occasion and in a different ink, which powerfully argues that this is a 'working document', not a copy. Contrast Plate 4.2, a single-sheet charter of the obscure King Swæfred of Essex, dated 704.[13] Its content is unobjectionable. But, quite apart from the fact that its script looks too late for 704, it is subscribed in the same hand and on what looks like the same occasion by two successive kings of Mercia (one referring to the other as his predecessor) and their entourages. Thus, it cannot but be a later copy.

Plate 4.2. King Swæfred of Essex for Bishop Waldhere of London, June 13th 704 (S 65; British Library Cotton Augustus II 82). The script is Anglo-Saxon minuscule of the mid or late eighth century. Text and all attestations, including those of successive Mercian kings, Coenred (704–9) and Ciolred (709–16), are in the same hand. © British Library, London.

Other, more obviously historical, methods are also of course relevant to the question of authenticity. Can the dates of donor, beneficiary and witnesses be reconciled with each other and with the purported date of the transaction? Had either the beneficiary of a charter or the archive that preserved it any motive for forging or tampering with the text? Such questions, like those just discussed, are often more easily asked than answered. But it is possible, by applying these techniques, to draw up a list. Twelve charters, as already stated, may be considered 'originals' or valuable early copies; these constitute 'Class I', and count as primary evidence for the period. 'Class II' contains sixty-four later copies which, whether on single-sheets or in cartularies, and whether on formulaic or circumstantial grounds, seem basically faithful copies of their respective 'originals', or else to have been 'adapted' so early as to be almost relevant; this category is trustworthy, so long as any idiosyncrasies are treated with caution. The thirty-one texts in 'Class III' show clear signs of forgery or interpolation, but have what might be called 'original symptoms'; they offer corroborative, but not unsupported, testimony.[14] The fairly numerous body of charters allegedly of my period but excluded from my list are either so heavily contaminated as to be suspect throughout or mere duplicates of already accepted material. Two points must be made about this exercise. The first is that, to an extent, it is arbitrary. One cannot be certain of the authenticity even of Hloth-here's charter. The dividing line between the first and second 'Classes' may seem firm, but two demonstrably early copies in one are matched by four apparently respectable single-sheets in the other, while four of 'Class II' survived in this form into modern times.[15] The division between second and third 'Classes' is still more blurred, as is the boundary between the latter and those not included. It is unlikely that any pair of scholars would wholly agree upon the contents or classification of such a list. But the second point is that, in one form or another, the exercise is unavoidable. Clearly, it is crucial whether a charter ascribing rule over 'Britain' or 'the English' is approximately 'original' or not.[16] And, to anticipate an issue with which I shall conclude, the reliability of charters is centrally important when assessing the legal meaning of their formulae. For our purposes, 'early formulae' are those found in 'Class I' or widespread in 'Class II'; they are not formulae found only in 'Class III', still less those confined to charters I have left unclassified.

Unavoidable or otherwise, one could by this time be pardoned for wondering whether charter-study yields anything of wider interest about Bede's England. Yet Hlothhere's charter is intrinsically important, indeed moving. Runes apart (which is how runologists, ancient and modern, like to keep them), it is the oldest piece of continuous handwriting by an Englishman. It was also part of the endowment of a church which, architecturally and sculpturally, rivalled even Jarrow, before it was even more drastically vandalized.[17] Charters matter, not just for their arcane mysteries, nor yet for the incidental information they supply, but because they are an integral part of the story of the administration and culture, the economy and the spirituality of early English society. The rest of this lecture is concerned with such

wider questions. I shall consider, first, their 'authorship', an issue with some bearing on the structure of government; second, their external inspiration, which relates directly to the sources of English Christianity itself; and, finally, the legal rights they conveyed, a problem with major implications for our understanding of Bede's world.

It has been common ground since Anglo-Saxon charters were first studied that their form owes nothing to the bureaucratic procedures of late Roman government, contrasting in this respect to papal documents, to Frankish royal *diplomata*, and to what little can be known of official practice in other barbarian kingdoms. Charters were introduced to the Anglo-Saxons, together with the Book itself, by the Church. In my period, at least, they were actually written in the greater churches; there was then no question of a body of royal clerks such as would later be dignified as a chancery.[18] They have the 'smell' of ecclesiastical documents, written, as some of the earliest are, in the sumptuous uncial script of holy books, on precious and carefully cut vellum; sanctioned as they are by the penalties of the next world rather than this, and by the use of a cross not as a witness's mark, but as a solemn symbol defying perjury or contradiction; motivated as many are by concern for the spiritual welfare of donor, beneficiary and others.

With one group of early charters, we can be fairly certain of the ecclesiastical agency responsible. The first of this group to be considered is what appears to be the second oldest Anglo-Saxon 'original', a grant by an otherwise unknown Hodilred/Œthelred, kinsmen of the king of Essex, to the nunnery of Barking, perhaps dated 687.[19] The evidence of its originality is, again, that it was written in two stages, though separated this time by as much as a century (Plate 4.3). As has long been recognized, the formulae of this charter have a double interest. First, they correspond startlingly with those of a charter issued in 587 by Gregory the Great, when still a deacon, to his own foundation of St Andrew's on the Coelian Hill in Rome, whence Augustine and no doubt many of his companions came to England.[20] This is true not only of the '*dispositio*' but also of the striking and unusual '*proem*' or '*arenga*', the preliminary statement of the donor's motive: 'when we seem to give something to holy places we give back to you what is yours, not ours.' Second, more or less the same formulae recur in a grant by the sub-king of Surrey (deputy to King Wulfhere of Mercia) for the local abbey of Chertsey, dated 672x4; the resemblance helps to establish the basic authenticity of this probably interpolated text from a very suspect cartulary. Features of one and/or other charter reappear, Gregory's *arenga* included, in a gift by the West Saxon King Cædwalla of an estate at Farnham, Surrey, dated 688.[21] The link between these documents is easily spotted. Eorcenwald, bishop of London (675–93), was the founding abbot of Chertsey, the brother of Abbess Æthelburh of Barking and a witness of all three charters.[22] There seems little doubt that he drafted each, for different beneficiaries and, more significant, different political authorities.

On such sound and familiar foundations, I shall now erect a more speculative structure for Bishop Eorcenwald's diplomatic influence. The early charters of his see,
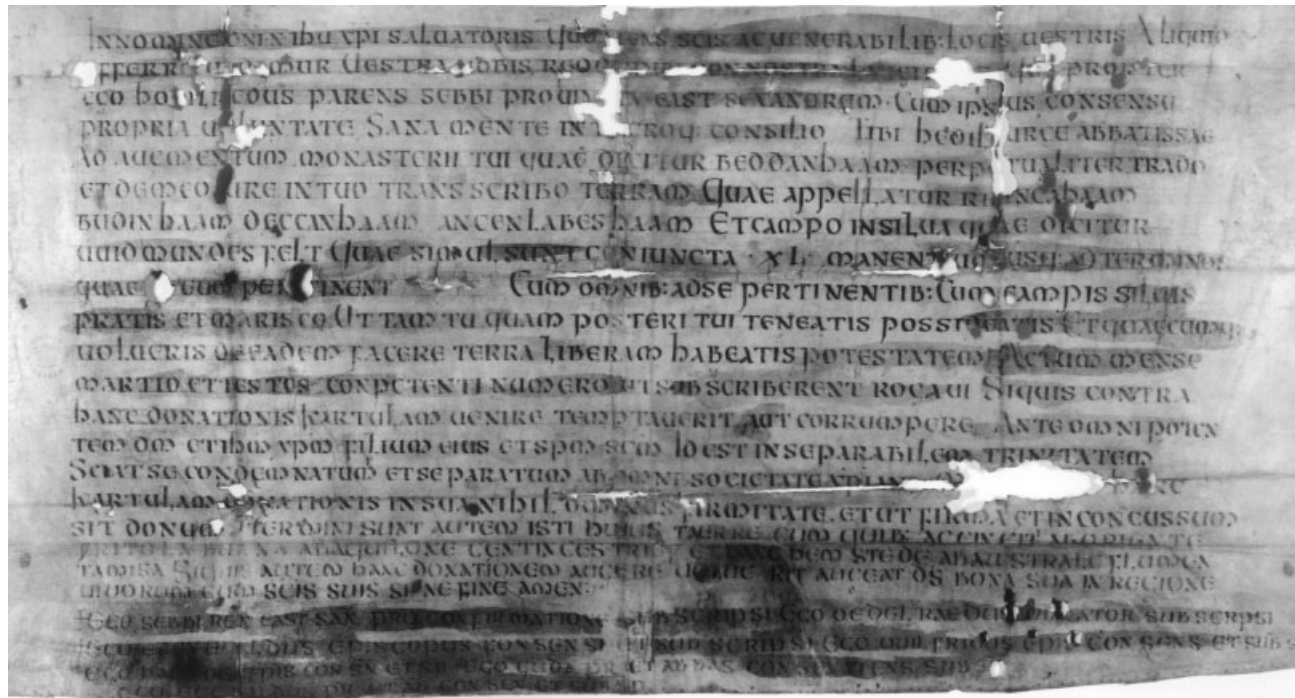
Plate 4.3. Holilred, kinsman of King Sebbi of Essex, for Abbess Hediburga of Barking, 687? (S 1171; British Library Cotton MS Augustus II 29). The script is again uncial, and it changes perceptibly after '*donum*' on line 17, in this instance into an 'imitative' uncial which, to judge from the orthography of the text, cannot be earlier than the late eighth century, whereas that of the first 16 lines could be contemporary with the transaction's date. © British Library, London.

the originally East Saxon bishopric of London, have further distinctive features. The
relevant documents are not only the above trio but also two admittedly problematic
charters in his own name, King Swæfred's 704 charter (Plate 4.2), five fragments
from a cartulary of St Paul's, and a very late single-sheet copy of a London charter of
King Æthelbald of Mercia (716–57).[23] The features include a persistent 'humility'
formula – Eorcenwald, like Gregory himself, is '*servus servorum Dei*'; a '*dispositio*'
using the word '*decrevi*' more or less ungrammatically, and such phrases as '*aliquan-
tulam partem terrae ... ad augmentum/construendum monasterii*'; and a penalty-clause
which either starts or finishes with a blessing for those who increase or amplify
the gift, which describes potential culprits as 'tyrants', and which, in one of
Eorcenwald's own charters, invokes the vengeance of the Nine Orders of Angels
upon them.[24] The common formulae of this group are not normally found together
in collections of my period, with one exception: the early charters of Wessex. Among
those they share are the 'humility' formula (Aldhelm too is '*servus servorum Dei*')
and the Nine Orders (who reappear in two charters from Aldhelm's Malmesbury).[25]
Singly, even doubly, such similarities would hardly attract attention, especially as,
singly and even doubly, they occur occasionally in charters from Kent, the Hwicce
and Sussex.[26] But as a common *set* they are suggestive, and they invite one to
look for a link between East and West Saxon diplomatic. The link is to hand in
Bishop Eorcenwald, already strongly suspected of producing charters for a close
associate of a king of Essex and for a king of Wessex, together with his successors in
the 'border' see of London. The possible importance of the London connection is
further highlighted by the fact that it is after King Æthelbald of Mercia seems to
have taken firm control of London *c.*730 that some of the same features are found in
charters of the Mercia-dominated Hwicce and of Mercia proper; for example,
Mercian and Hwiccian clergy attest 'humbly', a charter from Worcester in the
name of Archbishop Nothelm (ex-bishop of London) 'decrees (*decernit*)' a judge-
ment, and Aethelbald's privilege for the Mercian Church refers to the 'tyrannical
greed' of opponents.[27]

   What tempts me at least to see Eorcenwald as the source or channel of diplomatic
ideas in south-eastern England during my period is one formula above all. This is a
memorable *arenga* to the effect that what is merely said may well be forgotten, so
that it is wise to record a donor's gift in writing. In one of Eorcenwald's own charters
and in a St Paul's fragment of the first decade of the eighth century, it takes almost
exactly the same form: 'Those things which are salubriously defined according to the
decrees of canons and the statutes of synods (*decreta canonum ac statuta synodalia*),
though the word alone should suffice as evidence, nevertheless, because of the
uncertain condition of future times, ought to be strengthened by the most firm
record of writing and charters of warning.' A variant of this formula occurs in King
Swæfred's charter, in another St Paul's fragment, in the earliest West Saxon text to
survive and in several other more or less trustworthy Wessex documents.[28] Perhaps
more significant still, it first appears in a Mercian context as the *proem* of two

charters, dated 733, whereby King Æthelbald exempted the churches of Minster-in-Thanet and Rochester from paying customs-dues at London, which Æthelbald (like Bede, but unlike some modern archaeologists) evidently considered a thriving centre of trade;[29] and it is used again in Æthelbald's privilege of 749. The special reason for connecting Eorcenwald with sentiments about the value of written testimony is that he is explicitly named as 'my bishop' among those consulted in one of the great sets of barbarian '*statuta synodalia*', the law-code of King Ine of Wessex (*c.*688).[30] Is it coincidence that a cleric with a demonstrable interest in charters and in written evidence should be found in such a context, and should have been bishop of the see best placed to pass on the message to the new master of southern England in the 730s?

The question is not rhetorical. The proposition advanced here, like much in charter-study, is guesswork. It must take account of the fact that, apart from the three cases with which I began, his own charters and one other, Eorcenwald is not a witness of any of the charters where I have found my common formulae.[31] It must certainly reckon with the possibility that some of the relevant themes passed from Wessex to Eorcenwald: as we shall see, the 'humility' formula very probably appeared independently in Wessex, and the early West Saxon charter with a 'literacy' *arenga* is actually said to have been written by Wynbert, a West Saxon cleric who was to be St Boniface's abbot at Nursling. On the other hand, reliable records from early Wessex are generally more plentiful than those of early Essex, so that the balance of evidence is uneven.[32] At the least, the possible role of Eorcenwald and the see of London as common link between three families of charters, East Saxon, West Saxon and Mercian, underlines the responsibility of churches rather than chanceries for early Anglo-Saxon documents. At best, we have significant new evidence about one of those figures of whom one wishes that Bede had said more, and about the importance of the bishopric of London, so extraordinarily obscure in the first three centuries of documented English history.

Granted that the form and the ideas of the Anglo-Saxon charter came from the Church, I turn to the question of *which* Church: to what set of missionaries do we owe the evidence that I am discussing? There has almost always been just one answer, and the most serious attempt to suggest an alternative (Frankish) source collapsed under a spectacular barrage of erudition from Durham's great adopted son, Wilhelm Levison. For Levison, and for scholars before and after him, the origins of English diplomatic lay in the private charters, witnessed records of gift and sale between citizens, of sixth- and seventh-century Italy. We should therefore glance at one of these documents (Plate 4.4), a deed of sale from Ravenna, dated 572, written in late Roman cursive script on papyrus.[33] It survives more completely than almost any other of the series. The text is the work of one scribe, 'John the lawyer', who also wrote out the attestation of the illiterate vendor, his own acknowledgement of responsibility for the charter ('*completio*') and, finally, the names, families and qualifications of the witnesses. But the vendor very clearly writes his own *signum*,
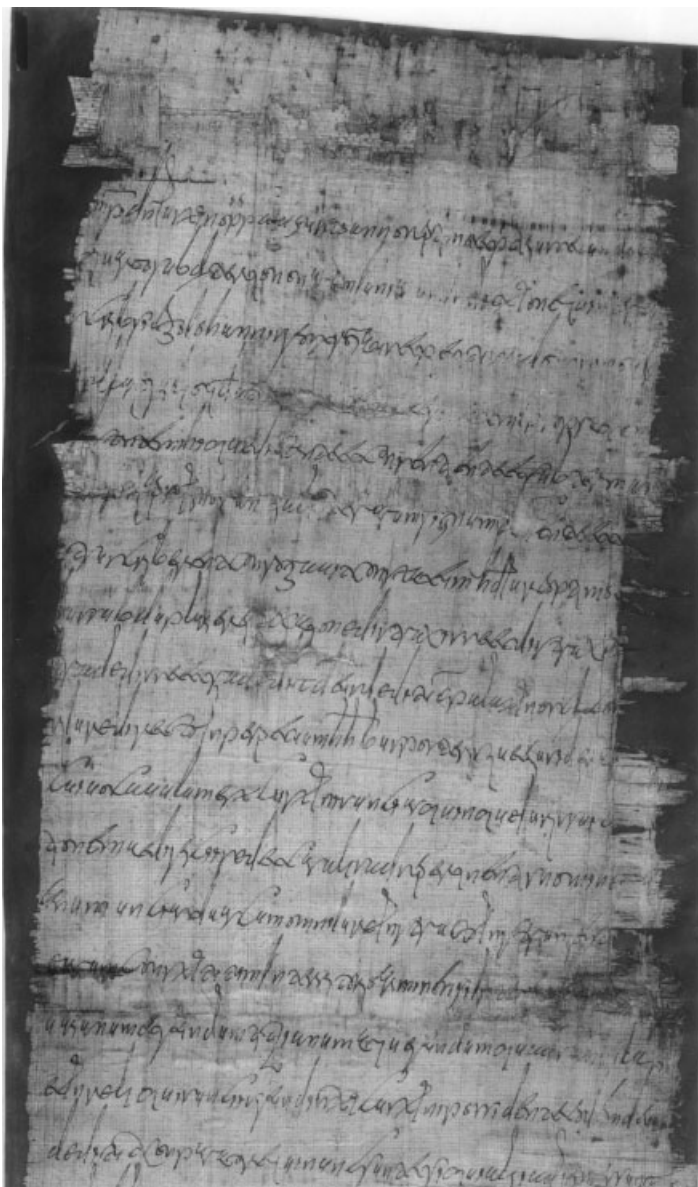
Plate 4.4. Domninus, '*vir honestus*', for Deusdedit, '*vir clarissimus*': sale of small estate in the territory of Rimini, June 3rd 572 (British Library Additional Manuscript 5412). The papyrus deed is in the 'late Roman cursive' script of Ravenna. Only the first 17 (out of 95) lines are shown here, and the whole document, one of the best preserved in existence, measures 2.55 × 0.30 metres. © British Library, London.

while the witnesses' elaborate attestations, rehearsing almost the whole transaction, are visibly autograph. In other Ravenna deeds, witnesses subscribe in Greek letters, though in Latin language, and even in Gothic.[34] Apart from the fact that the formulae of such documents do recur in English charters, it becomes easy to see why the latter are authenticated as they are: a seal would have been inappropriate for a private charter, but the apposite number of witnesses was demanded by Roman law, and it was natural to distinguish between the personal subscriptions of those who could write and the *signa manus* of the illiterate (in Anglo-Saxon terms, the laymen). All the same, one cannot resist the feeling that these impressive records belong to a different world than that of the Anglo-Saxon charter. It is not simply that they are in the 'business' script of Late Antiquity on the 'business' stationery of the Ancient World (abandoned by the Frankish chancery just when the Anglo-Saxon series began, but maintained by the Papacy into the eleventh century), where the uncials on vellum of Hlothhere's charter evoke what is sacred rather than profane. It is not even that they are huge: the 572 papyrus is over two-and-a-half metres long. It is that they have these features because of what they say and how they say it. The 572 document records the sale of a tiny portion of land by a very small-scale proprietor to a '*vir clarissimus*' who was evidently twisting his arm; yet such a minor transaction demands almost infinitely inflated and formulaic expression. Nothing is said once if it cannot be repeated several times in near-identical terms; and the text, like most lawyers' documents, is almost word for word the same as that of comparable deeds. These are the habits of what was still a highly legalistic civilization. The Anglo-Saxons soon learned to use documents as proof, but their charters continue to look like objects of reverence rather than record.

Before going on with the question *whence*, it is worth considering the question *when* charters were introduced to the Anglo-Saxons. Here too there was one orthodoxy until recently: charters appeared with Archbishop Theodore, as was suggested by the fact that we have genuine documents soon after 669 but not before. The new case against this view is based on two main arguments, though each has its own difficulties. First, by Theodore's time Italian diplomatic was much more sophisticated than what we find in England. The two documents for which we *know* Theodore to have been responsible, the decrees of the Councils of Hertford (672) and Hatfield (679), each follow contemporary Italian norms, in that the first has a '*rogatio*' clause naming the scribe, and the second begins with a necessarily complex dating-clause giving the regnal years of four different Anglo-Saxon kings. Anglo-Saxon charters beginning with regnal dates are few (and not always respectable); the naming of scribes is almost unknown.[35] The argument is thus that, if the Anglo-Saxon charter came from Italy, it must have done so earlier, before such notarial habits developed. Second, Anglo-Saxon diplomatic usage is strikingly various in different geographical contexts within a generation of Theodore's arrival. The relatively numerous Kentish charters of the last third of the seventh century, including two 'originals', have a recognizable local pattern, but nothing approaching

the uniformity that one would expect in the backyard of an archbishop who, as
several English bishops, Wilfred included, found to their cost, liked to have his own
way. Divergent usage argues more distant origins. It seems to follow that, if Italians
brought the charter to England, they were Augustine's companions, the disciples of
Gregory; and we have seen that one of Gregory's charters has significant echoes in
Eorcenwald's group.

Strong as they are, however, these arguments are vulnerable. In the first place, it
was Justinian's legislation of the *mid*-sixth century that revolutionized Italian notarial
practice, not least as regards the aspects just mentioned: inaugural regnal dating and
scribal attestation. It was then that they appeared in Ravenna deeds, and they
persisted thereafter in the Italian material, including the Lombard charters from
the early eighth century. One might think that such an institution as the Papacy had
its own bureaucratic procedures, whatever the emperor said, and Gregory's 587
charter has, in Justinianic terms, an irregular dating mechanism. But we have already
seen Gregory following Justinian in one respect, and the St Andrew's charter, unlike
the Anglo-Saxon *corpus*, has an impeccably Justinianic '*rogatio*'.[36] Nothing suggests
that the diplomatic of Gregory's Rome was so much at variance with that of Ravenna
as to explain the important differences between Italian and Anglo-Saxon charters.
Augustine's time is already too late itself for what it is in the English documents that
seems too early for Theodore's. And if we must look much earlier than 597 for
Italian parallels to Anglo-Saxon usage, this must arouse serious suspicions about its
exclusively Italian origin. Secondly, there is another, ostensibly more obvious,
explanation for the sheer variety of Anglo-Saxon diplomatic by 700, which is that
it had a variety of sources. One great strength of the Theodore hypothesis was that
he *did* control the whole English Church, and was the first, as Bede memorably put
it, to do so. On the other hand, the setbacks and disarray of Augustine's mission by
669 have become, however unfairly, by-words of Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical history.
One of the main developments of Bedan scholarship since this series began has been
a recognition that Bede oversimplified the coming of Christianity to England: it was
a process in which not only the Papacy (and Iona) but also many of the most
dedicated saints of north-western Europe were involved, before Theodore imposed
his iron grip. So, if not Theodoran, the English charter should have diverse origins
(Italian, of course, among them).[37]

My suggestion here is not that we should substitute a new source for the old, but
that we are in no position to discover any single precise source, that there was
probably more than one, and that, as it emerges into the historian's view, the Anglo-
Saxon charter was neither Italian nor Frankish nor Celtic but simply *sui generis*. We
must appreciate, in the first place, that the odds are unfairly stacked in favour of
Italian orthodoxy. At the English end, as I observed at the outset, reliable texts,
including ten out of twelve 'originals' or early copies, are confined to the south and
east of England, precisely the areas where one would expect Italian influence to be
strongest. Of the two other areas with significant early evidence, the first effective

bishop of the Hwicce was a pupil of the school at Canterbury and had been to Rome, and the same goes for the first great West Saxon cleric, Aldhelm.[38] We have very little from Mercia, virtually nothing from Northumbria and nothing at all from East Anglia – just where we might well have found other influences. The evidence is even more unbalanced at the continental end. The Italian material is indeed impressive. There are forty-seven original Ravenna papyri, ranging in date from 433 to 661, plus documents preserved in later Ravenna tradition.[39] There are no pre-ninth-century Papal originals, and the Papal formulary, or collection of charter blueprints, the *Liber Diurnus*, has lost much of its credit. But, to compensate, there is the immense correspondence of Gregory the Great, together with other papal records which have climbed in scholarly esteem as the *Liber Diurnus* fell. When the Lombard series begins, it is, again, numerous and respectable: nearly three hundred original or reliable charters (90 per cent of them private rather than royal) are extant from before the Frankish conquest of 774, though most postdate the end of my period, *c*.760, and very few pre-date 700.[40] The relative significance of the Italian survivals is brought out by comparison with two other parts of the sub-Roman West. Vandal North Africa supplies some quotations from Arian royal edicts by enraged Catholic historians, and a cache of private wooden documents covering a few years in the life of a small community, which turned up in the 1930s in circumstances suitably mysterious for the land of *Beau Geste*; Visigothic Spain, apart from an admittedly important formulary, offers little more than a number of transactions recorded on slate which tend to vanish into private collections almost as soon as they are unearthed.

But, given what we know of the Anglo-Saxon conversion, the comparisons that matter most are with Frankish and 'Celtic' usage. Frankish evidence is also impressive, superficially. Preserved in original form are thirty-eight Merovingian royal *diplomata*, and two of Pippin, Mayor of the Palace, from just before his 751 *coup*, plus fifteen private '*acta*'. In acceptable later copies are about fifty royal, twenty mayoral and sixty-five private charters from the same period. Finally, there are several formularies, one of which, Marculf's, is and was well-known. From the English angle, however, this material has serious drawbacks. Unlike the Italian, it is dominated, especially as regards originals, by royal charters (very largely from Saint-Denis), which, as we have seen, can hardly be compared with the Anglo-Saxon series because they derive from an official rather than a private Roman tradition. Of the more relevant private charters, only nine originals and an early copy have yet appeared in *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores*, and most are inadequately edited, if published at all; the above statistics are extrapolated from the *obiter dicta* of scholars now re-editing the Merovingian *corpus*. Above all, so many documents, in all categories, including a majority of originals and nearly all formulae, are too late in date to shed light on the origin of Anglo-Saxon diplomatic. Perhaps one royal diploma and one private charter in original form, five other reliable private charters and a selection of Angers and Auvergne formulae are pre-seventh-century.[41] As for

the 'Celtic' charter, the most pertinent comment is that its very existence was definitively established so recently that there has scarcely been time to investigate its wider influence. It is not difficult to see why it has been ignored for so long. There are no originals as such, though some of the entries in the 'Lichfield Gospels' look contemporary; and a high proportion of texts are entangled in saints' Lives and cartularies which scholars have preferred to sue as evidence of 'Celtic eccentricities' rather than of 'Celtic' records.

The available evidence does indicate an Italian origin for the Anglo-Saxon charter, but it could almost be said that it conspires to do so. The picture might look very different if it were not so dominated by Italian archives, especially Ravenna's, and, in Francia, by Saint-Denis and Marculf; if we had more early Frankish formulae or episcopal charters and less intractable 'Celtic' material; or if the records of northern and eastern England had not almost entirely disappeared. Granted the bias of the purely diplomatic evidence, what are the possibilities that the English charter had sources as varied as English Christianity? Is it relevant that, as I have argued elsewhere, the inspiration behind Anglo-Saxon privileges exempting monasteries from episcopal authority was probably Hiberno-Frankish?[42] The arguments for Italy and against Francia – though even the most ardent exponents of the Italian thesis have conceded limited Frankish influence – are, in part, that Anglo-Saxon diplomatic lacks such critical Frankish features as secular penalty-clauses, and, in part, that what might otherwise seem Frankish features are also Italian.[43] To take the second point first, we have already seen that Italian examples are almost bound to be more numerous than Frankish, and the argument anyway cuts both ways. The 'humility' formula of the Eorcenwald group is a good illustration. Pope Gregory made the papal office inseparable, however ironically, from his own '*servus servorum Dei*', and one would naturally suppose that both Eorcenwald and Aldhelm somehow derived it from him. Yet 'humility' formulae in general were regular in early Frankish episcopal charters; the first bishop known to have used one in an English context was the Frank, Leuthere of Wessex; and, for that matter, Eorcenwald may well be a Frankish name.[44] The first argument may also be deployed against Italian influence: we have seen that inaugural dating by regnal years and scribal '*completio*' were consistent Italian practices largely absent from England. But the point about the '*sanctio*' deserves slightly more consideration: Frankish texts normally stipulate heavy penalties in this life for those who infringe them, such as are almost entirely missing from English records, however heated they get about a culprit's prospects in the next world. Yet we have also seen that a problem with the Frankish evidence is that it is so late. Certain classes of Merovingian document have only spiritual sanctions, and secular penalties become common only about one-third of the way through the seventh century, when they also become prominent in legislation. The Italian material is itself ambiguous. Apart from deeds of sale, carrying the old Roman penalty of double restitution, a rough count of the Lombard *corpus* reveals thirteen, including the first reliable text (685), with purely spiritual threats, forty-

seven, among them the second oldest (700), with secular penalties, and sixty-four which, like nearly all Ravenna documents, have no specified sanction at all.[45] The two series of charters with exclusively supernatural injunctions are those of the Papacy (where we might recall that Gregory did expect thefts of Church property to be punished, so long as the Church did not profit thereby[46]), and the 'Celtic' family.

The possibility of 'Celtic' influence on the Anglo-Saxon charter was first can-vassed (almost unnoticed) fifty years ago, as regards the similarities between the boundary-clauses of the Book of Llandaff and the elaborate bounds which appear in the English evidence from the later eighth century, first in Latin, then in the vernacular. More recently, it has been noted that King Egfrith's charter for St Cuthbert (685), though otherwise a complete fabrication, shares a formula about 'a circuit of miles' with some problematic charters of Bobbio, founded by the Irishman, Columbanus. We may tentatively take such hints a little further. In the first place, the 'circuit' formula recurs in charters of the Frankish royal monastery, Stavelot-Malmedy, whose first abbot, Remaclus, came from the Columbanian foundation of Luxeuil.[47] Secondly, the Egfrith forgery seems to have involved a conflation of Bede with the Lindisfarne traditions incorporated in the tenth-century *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*. Here too we find the 'circuit' formula. Another feature of this text which certainly belongs to the 'Celtic' tradition is that gifts are made to the founding saint, not to his community's incumbent abbot. Elsewhere in early English charters, this is very unusual indeed. Almost the closest parallels, in charters of St Augustine's, appear to echo Marculf. But the most significant are in three 'originals' for Lyminge, directed to the 'Basilica of St Mary'; Lyminge was founded by a Northumbrian queen, and it so happens that its first charter has other Northumbrian aspects (Plate 4.5).[48] The evidence is thin, inevitably in the circum-stances. But at least it reflects what Bede implies about the Irish contribution to the making of the English Church. Now that we know that there was a charter-tradition in the Celtic West of Gaul and Britain, we can no longer ignore its implications for Anglo-Saxon diplomatic.

Not only, therefore, is the evidence unbalanced; it can be interpreted as pointing in more than one direction, and it is more difficult than is usually allowed to identify the English charter with any particular external family. To take a final example, the 'literacy' *arenga* considered above might possibly have Italian origins; but, equally, the famous Pauline *proem*, beginning '*Nihil intulimus in hunc mun-dum*', which occurs in early charters from Wessex and London, could well derive from Francia, where it appears in Marculf's formula for a *cessio regalis*.[49] But I would not wish to leave my conclusion in this purely negative form. The sheer difficulty of the exercise is itself significant. It arises partly from shortage of evidence, but also from the fact that private *acta* in the sub-Roman West had a common origin, and long retained many similarities in the various charter-traditions that gradually evolved. What may positively be said about the Anglo-Saxon charter is that it too belongs to this extended family in its own independent right, and shares a variety of

Plate 4.5. King Wihtred of Kent for St Mary's Abbey Lyminge, July 697 (S 19; British Library Stowe Charter 1). This is the earliest charter in insular half-uncials, and the script, together with evidence of Northumbrian orthography and what might be a Northumbrian formula, argues northern influence on a Kentish house originally founded by a widow of King Edwin of Northumbria (617–33). © British Library, London.

family traits with several other members. We can be confident about its distant
ancestor, the founder of the line, which was Roman, but we need to be more
cautious about the genealogical details which link the two; it is probably better to
see other traditions as cousins rather than fathers of the Anglo-Saxon. What we learn
from charters about the origins of English Christianity is not the impact of any one
mission; they make the more general point that England in the seventh century
established its own idiosyncratic relationship with the Roman world.

    This brings me to my final question: what difference did the introduction of this
legacy of *Pax Romana* by the Church – and in my period exclusively for the Church
– make to English land-tenure? What did the written instrument, which Anglo-
Saxons significantly called the 'book' actually do? This has been an especially
controversial topic. But no one thought it more controversial than Bede, and raising
this issue at last brings me back to a Jarrow lecturer's proper subject, for Bede's
evidence here is as important as that of charters themselves. Bede of course thor-
oughly approved of the endowment of the Church. His commentary on *Ezra and
Nehemiah*, though already voicing some of the anxieties we shall meet in a moment,
admired what Persian kings had done to re-establish and re-equip the Temple.[50] His
History of the Abbots cheerfully records the landed acquisitions, apparently by
charter, of his own monastery.[51] However, in the famous letter he wrote in the last
year of his life to Bishop Egbert of York, he struck a very different note.[52] There
were now many large monasteries, 'useful neither to God nor man in that neither is
there kept there a regular life, nor are they owned by thegns or gesiths of the secular
power who defend our people from the barbarians'. Citing Old Testament parallels,
he instructs the bishop and king

> to annul the irreligious and unjust acts and writings of our predecessors...lest in our
> times by the ceasing of religion, love and fear of him who sees into the heart may be
> abandoned, or else, by a dwindling supply of secular troops, there arise a lack of men to
> defend our territory from barbarian invasion. For...those who are totally ignorant of
> the monastic life have received under their control so many places in the name
> of monasteries...that there is a complete lack of places where the sons of nobles
> or of veteran thegns can receive an estate; and thus, unoccupied and unmarried...they
> either leave the country for which they ought to fight and go across the sea or
> else...devote themselves to loose living and fornication...Others...give money to
> kings, and under the pretext of founding monasteries buy lands on which they may
> more freely devote themselves to lust, and in addition cause them to be ascribed
> to them in hereditary right by royal edicts (*in ius sibi haereditarium regalibus edictis*),
> and even get their privileges confirmed...by the subscription of bishops, abbots and
> secular persons. And thus, having usurped for themselves estates and villages, and being
> henceforward free from divine as well as from human service,

they live with a motley rabble of '*satellitibus*' and indeed their wives. 'Thus, for about
thirty years...our province has been demented with that mad error...and...

numberless people have been found who call themselves abbots and at the same time reeves or thegns or servants of the king.' And Bede observes that the abuse would be more easily terminated if 'bishops themselves' were not keener to confirm such '*iniusta decreta*' by '*subscriptionibus*' than to annul them.

The first thing to say about this extraordinary diatribe is that Bede is describing charters, as is clear from his references to 'royal edicts', 'unjust decrees' and the 'subscriptions' of bishops, abbots and laymen. Secondly, the use of charters was connected with a monastic explosion whose results Bede deplored. How, then, are we to understand the proliferation of 'bookland', the chartered endowment of the Church? This is where Bede's indignation ends and that of modern scholars begins. I wish simply to review the various solutions to the bookland riddle so far offered, and to conclude with a brief suggestion of my own. The orthodox answer at present is that bookland was immune from various services due to the king, though probably not from military service: Bede's reference to freedom '*a divino simul et humano servitio*', like a comparable phrase in the *Ecclesiastical History*, is simply a character-istically elegant variation on the theme of the 'armour of God', which by no means excludes the tenants of Church lands, as opposed to churchmen (or pseudochurch-men) themselves, from military duties.[53] The first objection to this solution is that Bede was talking not, in the first instance, about shortage of service but shortage of land; young noblemen either desert the kingdom altogether for lack of reward, or carry on as both abbots and servants of the king. Bookland did deprive a king of followers, but because it deprived him of the wherewithal to attract them. The charters show why. By far the commonest term for the landed rights conveyed by reliable early texts is 'external right (*ius perpetuum*)' and appropriate verbal variants. Borrowed from the legal vocabulary of late- and sub-Roman Europe, it expressed the Church's determination to hold on to what had been given to the external God. Thus, bookland, at this stage, was theoretically land which the king lost for good, and it was the consequent attenuation of his resources, not the withholding of service, that undermined his support. The second flaw in the immunity theory is that the scribes of both English and continental charters knew that a gift of land was one thing and a grant of immunity quite another. Around the turn of the seventh and eighth centuries kings of Kent and Wessex began to dispense churches from certain services, but this entailed a special kind of charter. We have seen that Anglo-Saxon charters say both less and more than they mean. But to argue that the original essence of bookland was exemption from normal obligations is to suggest that texts fail to convey their meaning *when they could quite easily have done so*. We know that Frankish benefactions often involved immunity because this is made explicit. For the same reason, we know that English grants were beginning to, as my period ends.[54] So early charters could have proved the immunity thesis but did not. One can only conclude that they were grants not of immunity but simply of land. Immunity was something else and came later.

The second and third solutions relate bookland not to public service but to private interests, though in opposite ways.[55] According to the second, bookland broke the family entail, enabling what must otherwise have stayed within the kin to pass to the Church. This does at least explain why, after their stress on perpetuity, the most frequent feature of reliable early charters is the beneficiary's absolute freedom to do as he liked with his land, including posthumous bequest to the recipient of his choice – again a widespread element in continental *acta*. But it does not really explain why this had to be the business of kings and their councillors. The vast majority of early Anglo-Saxon grants are royal, and while one can readily appreciate that the public interest was at stake when charters did become grants of immunity, this is not obviously the case if they merely permitted a beneficiary to escape the claims of his kin: though the subscribers of charters use the language of 'consent', their original function was as witnesses. Moreover, the entail thesis fails to account, on its own, for Bede's use of the phrase '*ius haereditarium*': what is supposed, on this theory, to *break* hereditary right is here described as if it *were* hereditary right. Such is the starting-point of the third solution, which proposes that, unlike any other form of Anglo-Saxon land-tenure, bookland was heritable. Apart from Bede's own language, the heredity thesis seems to make sense of what he is describing. There is evidence, mostly in heroic poetry, that kings could – and, being kings, presumably did – revoke their warriors' property when possible or appropriate, for example in cases of disloyalty or on the death of either party; if bookland meant perpetual heredity, we can well understand why the king's interests were involved, why it exhausted royal resources and why noblemen were so keen to secure it as to pretend to be abbots. We can also see one good reason why the '*sanctio*' clauses of royal charters tend to threaten not the beneficiary's kin (as one would expect, given the second solution) but the king's heirs and successors.

But if the third answer is taken to mean that the Church introduced the Anglo-Saxons to the very notion of inherited property, then it both strains one's credulity and, again, fails to account for all the evidence. Even if we discount Tacitus, we need to explain why the English differed so much from their Germanic cousins as to know nothing of the rights of heirs memorably enshrined in the Frankish *Lex Salica* and the Lombard Edict of Rothari. Ernst Levy, the great Romanist who first exposed the influence of Roman 'Vulgar' Law (Roman Law for the man in the street) on the Germanic codes, certainly never supposed that it accounted for such clauses as these.[56] Levy did show that the Germanic notion of *gift* carried with it the expectation of reciprocity, and this, as we shall see, was a helpful insight. But gift and inheritance are not at all the same thing, and reciprocal generosity does not mean restricted heredity. So, even if the Anglo-Saxons had to be taught by the 'Vulgar' law of bookland about unrestricted gift, their sense of hereditary property should have needed no such stimulation. Besides, reliable early charters, unlike Bede, never speak of '*ius haereditarium*';[57] on the contrary, as already noted, they emphasize an individual recipient's freedom of disposition, without a hint of

hereditary entitlement – even though, paradoxically, a grant's intention at this stage was that land should go to the Church and stay there. A final objection is once more the language of Bede. His *History of the Abbots* shows that Benedict Biscop regarded hereditary succession as the *worldly* norm. This was in 690, well before Bede thought that the rot had set in, and his revered founder was determined above all else that dominated his last hours that his monasteries would *never* pass to a worldly heir.[58] Bede may have described bookland as '*ius haereditarium*', but he can never have thought that inheritance was invented by the endowment of the Church.

My own solution does, I think, cover all the evidence, including Bede's puzzling phrase. It derives from the distinction, very widespread in early legal systems, between *inherited* and *acquired* property. What one inherited from one's kin could not be alienated from one's kin; but what one acquired in any other way could be distributed at one's pleasure. This principle's relevance in early Germanic society is demonstrated by the fact that only when King Liutprand of the Lombards enacted that family land could pass to the Church (713) does the massive series of Lombard charters really begin, and a very high proportion of them are grants by private individuals, not, as in England, by kings.[59] There was no such legislation in England, where the position was thus: that the Church wanted permanent possession on principle and by definition, that the king wanted to recall donations to his warriors when they died or proved otherwise unsatisfactory, that the kin wanted to retain its heritage intact, and that the warrior nobleman, true to type, wanted more land than he had already in the hope of passing it to his direct heirs but not necessarily his wider family. The value of a charter, as its main formulaic elements show, was that it bestowed perpetual right, but was also proof of acquisition rather than inheritance, and hence of a beneficiary's right to select its destination. The Church achieved its permanent title either directly from the king, or indirectly from him *via* the nobility whose own likeliest source of acquisition was the king. The nobleman could either endow the Church or form a new family interest at his discretion. For the ultimate irony of bookland, to the cost of both the king and (in Bede's view) the Church, was that, in making acquisitions permanent, it gave them the character of inherited land, with the crucial difference that it extinguished the claims of the kin above and beyond a recipient's chosen heirs. This was why warriors rushed to acquire it, and why Bede, *in disgust*, could call it '*ius haereditarium*': in the second generation, that was exactly what it became. Bookland did not create hereditary tenure, but it did create a new kind of 'hereditary right', in both a narrower and a wider sense than the old, by introducing the concept of perpetual and (prayer apart) unrestricted donation, and by crucially blurring the distinction between the inherited and the acquired. We may thus understand not only Bede's letter, but the otherwise collectively inexplicable features of reliable early charters: their stress on perpetuity and freedom of disposition; the fact that so many were royal, and that it was the heirs of kings, not those of beneficiaries, who were threatened with supernatural sanctions; the fact that, though they came to

involve immunity and to be called 'hereditary', there is no sign that this was the case at first.

   We may also, of course, account for the profusion of monasteries in Bede's time; it was not only a response to the impact of a new faith, but also a way in which families enlarged their resources at the expense of kings, and at the price of turning their younger sons and withered daughters into churchmen and churchwomen. This suggestion should not be thought unduly cynical. One of the most famous early Anglo-Saxon charters, whose 'originality', like Hlothhere's, is indicated by the evidence that its subscriptions were written on different occasions, is the Ismere Diploma (736). It is celebrated mainly for the titles, 'king...of...the South English' and 'king of Britain', which it ascribes to Æthelbald of Mercia. Almost equally interesting is the fact that it created a family monastery of the type Bede decried, and while we know little more of Ismere, the nearby family monastery of Inkberrow possessed a notable patristic manuscript. Æthelbald's charter was granted 'for the remedy of my soul and the remission of my sins' to '*venerando comite meo Cyniberhtte*' ('my dear old companion, Cynibert'?). It was a contemporary view that Æthelbald's sins needed a lot of remission, but we have no grounds for supposing either phrase insincere. Everything about this transaction and the others like it expresses the fusion of the ideals of Church and warband which generated the cultural energy of early Anglo-Saxon Christianity.[60] I am not, then, arguing that the social revolution of converted England was as materialistically inspired as other revolutions of more recent and perhaps less happy memory. I suggest, rather, that the exploitation of a new form of land-tenure was a positive reaction by a formidable aristocracy to a different kind of spiritual commitment in the way it best under-stood. If one regards the reaction as worldly, one must also acknowledge that the movement, like all great religious movements, produced saints such as Biscop and Wilfred, who used their vast wealth to different but, even in Wilfred's case, not always personal ends; and one must recognize too that we owe much of the extensive surviving artistic and architectural memorials of early English Christianity to the love of display that was second nature to the sort of half-reeve/half-abbot that Bede stigmatized.

   Charters may be indigestible fare. But I aim to have shown three things by bringing them to Jarrow. First, they throw some dim extra light on the gaping darknesses of Bede's account of early English government and culture, especially in the south. Second, they may after all bring out the variety of religious traditions from which the Anglo-Saxons derived their faith – as is also argued by liturgical, palaeographical and artistic evidence. Third, and above all, the two most significant things that we know about the endowment of Bede's *Ecclesia Anglorum* are that it was vast, and that Bede came to disapprove of the form that it was taking. From almost as soon as we know about it in post-biblical sources, the Christian Church has always been startlingly rich. This is both an effect and a cause of its success. An effect and a cause, equally, have been the lives and thoughts of men like Bede, who

rejoiced in the Church's wealth, but who knew that ecclesiastical wealth misused is worse than no wealth at all.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL APPENDIX
[with Additions since 1984]

As originally published, this chapter was accompanied by a first Appendix classifying charters into categories of 'originals or early copies' (I), 'broadly trustworthy later copies' (II), and 'unreliable later copies with possibly genuine elements' (III) – and omitting more or less outright fabrications, useless as evidence for their purported date. I have dropped this Appendix, because it has been superseded by much recent work, especially Dr Susan Kelly's superb editions, and her revision of 'Sawyer' (S) – which anyway incorporates my classification into her 'Comments' sections; this is as yet unprinted but already available (less Professor Keynes's list of 'Lost or Incomplete Texts', i.e. all after no. 1600) on the Web; see Abbreviations, S.

As explained in n. 4, this Bibliographical Appendix aims to be a comprehensive, yet selective, survey of editions and commentaries used when writing this essay, in the hope partly to avoid polemic in text or notes, and partly to show readers where I have been led and, it may be, misled. [Additions are square-bracketed.]

The standard work on 'Diplomatic' remains H. Bresslau, *Handbuch der Urkundenlehre für Deutschland und Italien* (3 vols, Berlin, 1912–60); it is in part superseded by A. de Boüard, *Manuel de diplomatique, française et pontificale* (3 vols, Paris, 1929–48), and by G. Tessier, *Diplomatique royale française* (Paris, 1962). **Shorter studies of wide relevance** are: J. Studtmann, 'Die Pönformel der mittelalterlichen Urkunden', *Archiv für Urkundenforschung* I (1931–2); W. John, 'Formale Beziehungen der privaten Schenkungsurkunden Italiens', ibid., xiv (1935–6); L. Santifaller, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Beschreibstoffe im Mittelalter* XV, Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung, Ergänzungsband (1952); P. Classen, 'Kaiserreskript und Königsurkunde', *Archiv für Diplomatik* 1 (1955), pp. 1–87, 2 (1956), pp. 1–115; 'Fortleben und Wandel spätrömischen Urkundenwesens im frühen Mittelalter', in Classen (ed.), *Recht und Schrift im Mittelalter*, Vorträge und Forschungen XXIII (Sigmaringen, 1977), pp. 13–54; H. Fichtenau, *Arenga*, Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung, Ergänzungsband XVIII, 1957); idem, *Das Urkundenwesen in Österreich*, Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung, Ergängzungsband XXIII, 1971), esp. pp. 56–97.

The major collections of sources: *ChLA* is a lavish series of facsimiles of Latin charters before 800 (but also including papyri of Roman Egypt and relic-labels); see reviews of vols iii–iv by B. Bischoff, *HZ* 223 (1976), pp. 689–96, of xx by B. Ross, and of xiv by D. Ganz, *Speculum* 59 (1984), pp. 625–7, 889–91. **For the Ravenna Papyri**, the indispensable edition is J.-O. Tjäder (ed.), *Die nichtliterarischen Papyri Italiens aus der Zeit 445–700* (3 vols, Lund, 1954–82); for the later period, recourse must still be had to *I papyri diplomatici raccolti ed illustrati*, ed. G. Marini (Rome, 1805). **For the Papacy**, the main sources are: *Greg. Ep.*; *Liber Diurnus Romanorum Pontificum*, ed. T. von Sickel (Vienna, 1889); and, for facsimiles of the earlier extant originals, *Acta Pontificum*, ed. I. Battelli, Exempla

Scripturarum III (2nd edn, Vatican, 1965). **For the Lombard material**, see L. Schiaparelli and C.-R. Brühl (eds), *Codice Diplomatico Longobardo*, vols 1–3(I), Fonti per la storia d'Italia 62–4 (Rome, 1929–73) [now continued, ed. C.-R. Brühl and I. Zielinski, Fonti 65–6, Rome, 1986, 2003], with some facsimiles in *Codice Paleografico Lombardo*, ed. G Bonelli (Milan, 1980). **With the Frankish material**, apart from *ChLA* xiii, xiv, xvii, [there is at last a 'standard' edition, *Die Urkunden der Merowinger*, ed. G. Kölzer (2 vols, MGH, Dipl., 2001); Kölzer prints four more royal diplomata than Pertz's Monumenta folio edition (1868!), but also reckons many more spurious or at least doubtful; and the really telling statistic for the argument above, pp. **147–8**, about the unevenness of Frankish evidence is his total of 415 lost *acta*, a high proportion of them early; I discuss the statistics in a review, to appear in *EME*, where I also raise the question whether early English diplomatic may not itself have had a first 'papyrus' phase, contemporary with the Merovingian, i.e. to *c.*660. See also the earlier and in some ways photographically better] collection of Merovingian royal originals, P. Lauer and C. Samaran (eds.), *Les Diplômes originaux des Mérovingiens* (Paris, 1908); for the 'private' charters, it is still necessary to use *Diplomata, Chartae, Epistolae, Leges, aliaque instrumenta ad res Gallo-Francicas spectantia*, ed. J. M. Pardessus (2 vols, Paris, 1843–9); for the Formularies, including that of Marculf, *Form*. **The Vandal evidence**, such as it is, is in *Tablettes Albertini: Actes privés de l'époque Vandale*, ed. C. Courtois et al. (Paris, 1952); **The Visigothic**, apart from Zeumer's edition of its Formulary, in M. Diaz y Diaz, 'Un document privé de l'époque wisigothique sur ardoise', *Studi Medievali*, 3rd series, i (1960), pp. 52–71, and 'Los documentos hispano-visigoticos sobre pizarra', ibid. vii (1966), pp. 75–107; [for a full edition, *Diplomatica Hispano-Visigoda*, ed. A. Canellas-Lopez (Zaragoza, 1979)]. **The Celtic evidence**, for which see Davies below, can be sampled in J. G. Evans and J. Rhys (eds.), *The Text of the Book of Llan Dav* (reprint, Aberystwyth, 1979); 'Cartulaire de Landévennec', ed. R. F. L. Le Men and E. Ernault, *Mélanges Historiques* V (Paris, 1886), pp. 553–600; *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh*, ed. L. Bieler, Scriptores Latini Hiberniae 8 (Dublin, 1979); J. O'Donovan, 'The Irish Charters in the Book of Kells', *Miscellany of the Irish Archaeological Society* I (1846); A. C. Lawrie (ed.), *Early Scottish Charters* (Glasgow, 1905); and K. Jackson (ed.), *The Gaelic Notes in the Book of Deer* (Cambridge, 1972).

Further detailed discussion of this material: Papacy, H. H. Anton, *Studien zu den Kloster-privilegien* (see above chapter 1, 'Additional Note' 6, p. 28); L Santifaller, *Liber Diurnus. Studien und Forschungen*, ed. H Zimmermann, Päpste und Papsttum 10 (Stuttgart, 1976); and above, pp. 7–10. **Frankish**: six major studies by E. Ewig, conveniently assembled at the end of his collected papers, *Spätantikes und Fränkisches Gallien* II, Beihefte der Francia 3/2 (Munich, 1979), pp. 411–83; L. Levillain, 'La charte de Comte Eberhard pour l'Abbaye de Murbach', *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes* XCIX (1938), pp. 5–41; K. H. Debus, 'Studien zu merowingischen Urkunden und Briefen', *Archiv für Diplomatik* XIII (1967), pp. 1–109, XIV (1968), pp. 1–192; U. Nonn, 'Merowingische Testamente...', ibid. XVIII (1972), pp. 1–129; W. Bergmann, 'Untersuchungen zu den Gerichtsurkunden der Merowingerzeit', ibid. XXII (1976), pp. 1–186; D. Ganz, 'Bureaucratic Shorthand and Merovingian Learning', *Ideal*, pp. 58–75. **Visigothic**: R. Collins, 'Sicut Lex Gotorum Continet: law and charters in ninth- and tenth-century Léon and Catalonia', *EHR* C (1985), pp. 489–512. **Celtic** evidence was, in effect, discovered by W. Davies, 'The Latin Charter-tradition in western Britain, Brittany and Ireland in the early medieval period', in

D. Whitelock et al. (eds), *Ireland in Early Medieval Europe: Studies in Memory of Kathleen Hughes* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 258–80; see also D. Jenkins and M. Owen, 'Welsh Marginalia in the Lichfield Gospels, I–II', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 5 (1983), pp. 37–66, 7 (1984), pp. 91–120. **For the land law of early medieval Europe**, the definitive study is E. Levy, *West-Roman Vulgar Law: The Law of Property* (Philadelphia, 1954); see also M. Kröll, *L'Immunité franque* (Paris, 1910); F.-L. Ganshof, *Frankish Institutions under Charlemagne* (New York, 1970), pp. 45–50; and A. Gurević, 'La notion de la propriété pendant le haut Moyen-Age', *Annales* XXVII (1972), pp. 523–47. [More recent work on late Roman law, emblematically P. Garnsey and C. Humfress, *The Evolution of the Late Antique World* (Cambridge, 2001), ch. 4, has yet to impact on perceptions of post-Roman land law.]

Access to the Anglo-Saxon material must now be sought via 'Sawyer' [as now re-edited by Kelly and Keynes (see Abbreviations, S)]. Apart from *ChLA* iii and iv, relevant only for 'original' or near-contemporary texts, the standard edition of charters for the period under discussion remains Birch's *BCS*. As Miss Edwards put it to me, Birch is always as good as his sources, but there were cartularies that he missed altogether, and others where he had access only to inferior texts. His edition [which is now being authoritatively displaced, cartulary by cartulary by editions in The British Academy Anglo-Saxon Charters series] and can be further supplemented by E. H. Bates (ed.), *Two Cartularies of the Benedictine Abbeys of Muchelney and Athelney*, Somerset Record Society, XIV (1899), superseded for Bath and Glastonbury respectively by *Two Chartularies of the Priory of St Peter of Bath*, ed. W Hunt, Somerset Record Society VII (1893), and by *The Great Chartulary of Glastonbury*, ed. A Watkins, ibid. LIX (1947), LXIII (1952), LXIV (1956); better editions of the Barking charters, with useful discussion, are in C. R. Hart, *The Early Charters of Eastern England* (Leicester, 1966), pp. 117–45; H. P. R. Finberg, *The Early Charters of the West Midlands* (Leicester, 1961), pp. 197–216, must be consulted for the 'Testament of St Mildburg'; [the 'Historia de Sancto Cuthberto' can now be consulted in the edition by T. Johnson-South, *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* (Cambridge, 2002)].

The first major studies of Anglo-Saxon charters were those of W. H. Stevenson: (with A. S. Napier), *The Crawford Collection of Early Charters and Documents* (Oxford, 1895); and 'Trinoda Necessitas', *EHR* XXIX (1914), pp. 689–703. His work was followed up by F. M. Stenton, *The Early History of the Abbey of Abingdon* (Reading, 1913); 'Medeshamstede and its colonies', *Prep. ASE*, pp. 179–92; and *The Latin Charters of the Anglo-Saxon Period* (Oxford, 1955); also by D. Whitelock, *EHD* I, pp. 369–82. Significant and largely neglected early contributions were G. M. Young, *The Origin of the West Saxon Kingdom* (Oxford, 1934), pp. 21–6; and M. P. Parsons, 'Some Scribal Memoranda for Anglo-Saxon Charters of the 8th and 9th Centuries' in Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung, Ergänzungsband, XIV (1939). **Major new departures** were signalled by Levison, *Continent*, pp. 174–233; by the 'Leicester series' of geographically arranged lists, inaugurated by H. P. R. Finberg (see previous paragraphs, plus, e.g., H. P. R. Finberg, *The Early Charters of Wessex* (Leicester, 1964); by Brückner's introduction to *ChLA* iv, with superior German version in *Archivalische Zeitschrift* LXI (1965), and above all by the work of Pierre Chaplais: 'Origin', 'Chancery', 'Single Sheets', and 'Augustine' – all reprinted in F. Ranger (ed.), *Prisca Munimenta: Studies . . . Presented to A. E. J. Hollaender* (London, 1973). **Important contributions since Chaplais** are: N. P. Brooks, 'The

Development of Military Obligations in Eighth- and Ninth-century England', *England before Conquest*, pp. 69–84 [reprinted in his *Communities and Warfare, 700–1400* (London, 2000), pp. 32–47]; idem, 'Anglo-Saxon Charters: The Work of the Last Twenty Years', *ASE* 3 (1974), pp. 211–31 [reprinted with postscript, *Anglo-Saxon Myths: State and Church, 400–1066* (London, 2000), pp. 181–215]; idem. *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984), esp. Appendix B, pp. 327–30; P. Sims-Williams, 'Continental Influence at Bath Monastery in the Seventh Century', *ASE* 4 (1975), pp. 1–10; idem, 'Cuthswith, Seventh-century Abbess of Inkberrow…', *ASE* 5 (1976), pp. 1–21; and A. Scharer, *Die angelsächsische Königsurkunde im 7. und 8. Jahrhundert* (Vienna, 1982). [See now all Dr Kelly's Introductions to her editions, in the British Academy series and onwards, plus her 'Anglo-Saxon Lay Literacy and the Written Word', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 36–62, esp. 41–2, on the issue of a possible papryus phase in early English diplomatic; Edwards (as n. 1 below), esp. pp. 309–13; and, among recent work by S. Keynes, 'The West Saxon Charters of King Æthelwulf and his Sons', *EHR* CIX (1994), pp. 1109–49.]

For early English land law, aside from the work of Stenton, Whitelock and Brooks above, see: P. Vinogradoff, 'Folkland', *EHR* VIII (1893), pp. 1–17, reprinted in his *Collected Papers* I, pp. 91–111; J. E. A. Joliffe, 'English Book-right', *EHR* L (1935), pp. 1–21; Stenton, *ASE*, pp. 307–12; E. John, *Land Tenure in Early England* (Leicester, 1960), and 'Folkland Reconsidered', in his *Orbis Britanniae and other Studies* (Leicester, 1966), pp. 64–127; D. A. Bullough, 'Anglo-Saxon Institutions and the Structure of Anglo-Saxon Society', *Annali della fondazione italiana per la storia amministrativa* II (1965), pp. 645–59; H Vollrath, *Königtum und Königsgedanke bei den Angelsachsen* (Cologne, 1971), pp. 192–225; J. C. Holt, 'Politics and Property in Early Medieval England', *PP* 57 (1972), pp. 1–52; and T. M. Charles-Edwards, 'The Distinction between Land and Moveable Wealth in Anglo-Saxon England', in P. H. Sawyer (ed.), *English Medieval Settlement* (London, 1979), pp. 97–104. [S. Reynolds, 'Bookland, Folkland and Fiefs', *Anglo-Norman Studies* XIV (1991/2), pp. 211–27, gives her distinctive interpretation of the problem; R. Faith, *The English Peasantry and the Growth of Lordship* (Leicester, 1997), chs 1–4, is a major reconsideration of estate structure, permitting a whole new understanding of the 'Immunity' issue. I have given preliminary sketches of my ideas in Campbell, *Anglo-Saxons*, pp. 95–8, in ch. 7, below, pp. 231–3, and in 'On þa wæpnedhealfe: kingship and royal property from Æthelwulf to Edward the Elder', in N. J. Higham and D. Hill, *Edward the Elder* (Manchester, 2001), pp. 264–79, at pp. 264–6.]

NOTES

1 This group comprised Wendy Davies (hostess and organizer), Roger Collins, Paul Fouracre, David Ganz, Jane Hyam, Rosemary Morris, Janet Nelson, Timothy Reuter, Richard Sharpe, Chris Wickham, Ian Wood, Jenny Wormald and myself; since 1984 afforced by Lesley Brubaker and Ann Christie, and (alas) deprived of Tim Reuter. For the first set of 'Proceedings', see W. Davies and P. Fouracre (eds), *The Settlement of Disputes in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1986) (and see additions to the Bibliographical Appendix). To them (after Bede) I dedicated this lecture, in gratitude for inspiration and

amicitia; I am especially grateful to those who criticized and reinforced my draft, and to Dr Wormald, as usual, for other kinds of encouragement. I must also thank Nicholas Brooks and Simon Keynes for comment and assistance, and especially my pupil, Heather Edwards, whose Glasgow Ph.D. thesis on the early charters of Wessex [later published, *The Charters of the Early West Saxon Kingdom* (British Archaeological Reports, British series 198, 1988)] added a whole dimension to my subject. Finally, I thank Martin Saunders, Gerald Bonner, Rosemary Cramp, David Wilson and other members of the Jarrow Trust for their invitation, hospitality and patience.

2   Though Colgrave and Mynors, *Eccl. Hist.* offers marginally the best text, I cite the classic Plummer, *HE*, because it also contains both HA, VC and Ep. Ecgb.

3   This terminus has the additional advantages of (a) preceding the earliest charters granted to laymen for apparently secular purposes and the first granted by or associated with King Offa of Mercia (757–96), who changed the picture in more ways than one; (b) coinciding roughly with major changes in related continental areas – the Carolingian coup of 751, the final fall of Byzantine Ravenna to the Lombards in the same year, and Charlemagne's conquest of the Lombard kingdom in 774.

4   In order to avoid the kind of polemic that would be quite out of place in this series, as well as greatly lengthening these notes, I supply a substantial bibliography of work that I have found relevant in the Bibliographical Appendix [with additions for work since 1984]. I apologize to scholars for rarely referring henceforth to their detailed argument, whether I agree with it or not. And because expert readers will realize that there are two particular modern scholars from some of whose views I dissent, I gladly admit that those from whom I have learnt most about this subject are Pierre Chaplais and Eric John.

5   S 8 (*ChLA* iii 182) (679); Chaplais' discussion, 'Single Sheets', pp. 317–27, is fundamental.

6   Master-forgers at work: Levison, *Continent*, pp. 174–233; P. Chaplais, 'The Original Charters of Herbert and Gervase, Abbots of Westminster', *A Medieval Miscellany for Doris Mary Stenton*, ed. P. M. Barnes and C. F. Slade, Pipe Roll Society NS XXXVI (London, 1962), pp. 89–109 (reprinted in *Essays in Medieval Diplomacy and Administration*, London, 1981, ch. XVIII); and the reaction of C. N. L. Brooke, 'Approaches to Medieval Forgery', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 3 (1965–9), pp. 377–86, at p. 380.

7   D. Knowles, *Great Historical Enterprises* (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 45–51.

8   These are particularly evident in Merovingian diplomata: *ChLA* xiii, xiv (1981, 1982); it is a nice point that the allegedly obscure and *fainéant* later Merovingians are the last north European kings for many centuries whose signatures we know.

9   R. A. Markus, 'Gregory the Great's Europe', *TRHS* 5th ser. 31 (1981), pp. 21–36.

10 K. Harrison, *Framework of Anglo-Saxon History* (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 65–75, argues with some conviction that AD dates were used in Anglo-Saxon charters before Bede's *HE* popularized the practice; equally, in many instances, they have clearly (and often wrongly) been deduced from indictional evidence.

11 As in the 'original' S 89 (*ChLA* iii 183) (736) – see p. 157.

12 D. H. Wright (ed.), *The Vespasian Psalter*, EEMSF XIV (Copenhagen, 1967), p. 56.

13 S 65 (*ChLA* iii 188) (704).

14 A representative example of 'Class III', S 1245 (675) would, if regarded as basically trustworthy, make so much wasted time of a century's Anglo-Saxon diplomatic studies: M. Lapidge and M. Herren, *Aldhelm: the Prose Works* (Ipswich, 1979), pp. 173–5. But

some elements (including the witness-list), beginning at 'Sed ne fortis contentionis . . .', fit the early West Saxon pattern well.

15 S 65 (as n. 13), 92 (749) (Class I, marked * [in previous version]); 'Class II' texts on post-800 single sheets: S 1248 (*OSFacs* ii Westm. 1) (693 ?), 248 (*OSFacs* ii Taunton) (705/6), 88 (*ChLA* iii 197) (733), S 100 (716x*c.*730); 'Class II' texts apparently extant on single sheets into the eighteenth century: S 53 (693 ?), 76+1252 (697×9, 699×717), 1177 (704×9), 95 (723×737).

16 Ch. 3, above, pp. 111–13.

17 Campbell, *Anglo-Saxons*, p. 107.

18 For the controversy on this issue in the later period, now an Old English 'classic', see S. Keynes, *The Diplomas of King Æthelred 'the Unready', 978–1016* (Cambridge, 1980), with my review, *History* 67 (1982), pp. 309–10, and that of P. Chaplais, *JEH* 35 (1984), pp. 262–5.

19 S 1171 (*ChLA* iii 187) (690×3?). See again, Chaplais, 'Single Sheets', pp. 327–32.

20 *Greg. Ep.* II, Appendix I, pp. 437–9.

21 S 1165 (672×4), 235 (688). See Scharer, *Angelsächsische Königsurkunde* (as Bibliographical Appendix), pp. 129–41.

22 *HE* iv 6–11, pp. 218–27; D. Whitelock, *Some Anglo-Saxon Bishops of London* (London, 1974), pp. 5–10.

23 S 65, 1248, 100, 1246 (687) 1783–5 (693×709), 1787–8 (706×9, 716×45).

24 'Humility': S 235, 1246, 1248; 'decrevi', etc.: S 65, 1248; 'aliquantulam partem', etc.: S 65, 1783–5, 1787; 'ad augmentum', etc.: S 1171, 1165, 235, 1783; 'Blessing' *sanctio* S 1171, 65, 1248; 'tyrannical power': S 65, 235, 1248; Nine Orders: S 1248.

25 'Humility': S 51 (675), 1164 (*c.*676), 252 (688×90), 239 (687), 245 (704), 248 (705×6), 1253 (712), 253 (729), and cf. S 1245; Nine Orders: S 71 (681), 245; compare 'decrevi', etc.: S 51, 1164, 1169 (685), 1170 (688), 231 (?688), 243 (701), 251 (725); 'Blessing' *sanctio*: S 71, 237 (682) 253, etc.

26 'Humility': S 20 (*BAFacs* 1) (699), 7 (675), 13 (690), 89; 'ad augmentum', etc.: S 45 (692 ?); 'Blessing' *sanctio*: S 1177 (704×9), 97 (716×17).

27 S 89, 1429 (736×7), 92; cf. 'ad augmentum . . .', S 89, 1429.

28 S 1248, 1787, 65, 1784, 1164, 1169, 244 (702), 248, 236 (681), 240 (693), 241 (699).

29 S 86 (?733), 88. It is evident from their near-identical drafting that these two charters come from the same *scriptorium*, and the contents would suggest that 'Willanhalch', mentioned in the former, was near London. S 87 looks like a skilful and early forgery based on S 86. For Bede on London's commerce, see *HE* ii 3, p. 85, iv 22, p. 251; and for recent indications that he may have been right after all, see M. Biddle, 'London on the Strand', *Popular Archaeology* 6 (1984), pp. 23–7, and A. Vince, 'The Aldwych: mid-Saxon London discovered?', *Current Archaeology* (8) 93 (1984), pp. 310–12.

30 *Gesetze* I, pp. 88–9.

31 That 'other' is S 51, the interesting 'foundation charter' of Bath Abbey; Dr Edwards informed me that the attestation printed by *BCS* 127 as 'Frignualdus' appears in the best MS and in Hunt's edition of the Bath cartulary as 'Ergnualdus'.

32 The dating brackets of S 1164 are 670×6, but there are reasons for preferring 676, which would fall after Eorcenwald's earliest Surrey charter (S 1165). There is no evidence

that King Centwine, whom Aldhelm, his relative, regarded as a notable warrior, did not
absorb Surrey as early as 674, when Wulfhere of Mercia came to grief in the North.

33   *ChLA* iii 181; Tjäder, *Nichtliterarischen Papyri* (as Bibliographical Appendix) 35, II,
     pp. 103–13.

34   E.g. *ChLA* iv 240, xx 704; Tjäder 34, II, pp. 91–105, esp. pp. 95–6.

35   *HE* iv 5, pp. 214–17, iv 17, pp. 239–40. Cf. S 7 (675), 1167–8 (681), 10 (689×91).
     These are the arguments forcefully deployed by Chaplais, 'Origin', pp. 49–52, and
     'Augustine'.

36   Tjäder, vol. 1, pp. 250–60. Equally, two sets of Gregory's synodical minutes lack *rogatio*
     (like Hatfield in Bede's account), but they have orthodox dating clauses: *Greg. Ep.* v 57,
     I, pp. 362–7, xi 15, II, pp. 275–7.

37   *HE* iv 2, p. 204. The seminal paper was J. Campbell, 'The First Century of Christianity
     in England', *Ampleforth Journal* LXXVI (1971), pp. 12–29 (reprinted in *Essays*, pp. 49–
     67), but its angle was anticipated by J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Rome and the Early English
     Church', *Sett. Spol.* VII (1960/1), pp. 519–48 (reprinted in *EMH*, pp. 115–37).
     Conclusions similar to mine about the Anglo-Saxon charter had happily been reached
     independently and on different arguments by Scharer, *Königsurkunde*, esp. pp. 56–7.

38   For Oftfor, *HE* iv 23, pp. 254–5; for Aldhelm, Lapidge and Herren, *Aldhelm*, pp. 153–4,
     163, with appropriate introductory material and notes.

39   An important supplement to Tjäder's invaluable discussion, I, pp. 17–23: T. S. Brown,
     'The Church of Ravenna and the Imperial Administration in the Seventh Century', *EHR*
     XCIV (1979), pp. 1–28.

40   These figures, based on Schiaparelli and Brühl, *Codico diplomatico* (as Bibliographical
     Appendix), discount not only 'falsificazioni', but also the early Bobbio charters: see n.
     47. See Bibliographical Appendix for Kölzer et al.

41   The texts to which this sentence refers are *ChLA* xiii 550, xiv 592; Pardessus (as
     Bibliographical Appendix) CXVIII, CXL, CLXXX, CLXXXVI, CLXXXIX; Zeumer
     (as Appendix), pp. 1–31. D. Ganz, review of *ChLA* xiv, *Speculum* 59 (1984), pp. 889–
     91, suggests that xiv 592 may be even earlier than the editors allow.

42   Further to my discussion and that of Anton (ch. 1, pp. 7–10, and its 'Additional Note',
     p. 28), Dr Edwards has established the basic authenticity of the Malmesbury privilege,
     BCS 105, 'Two Documents from Aldhelm's Malmesbury', *Bulletin of the Institute of
     Historical Research* LIX (1986), pp. 1–19, at pp. 9–13, 16–19.

43   For qualifications to otherwise powerful 'Italianate' arguments, see Levison, *Continent*,
     pp. 226–8, and unpublished submission of Dr Chaplais, 'La Chancellerie royale anglaise
     des origines au règne de Jean Sans Terre', to the Budapest conference on historical
     Diplomatic (1973), which admits that the toll-charters of the eighth century (see n. 29
     above have links (not surprisingly) with Marculf's relevant formulae.

44   Pardessus, CCLIV, CCCXLV, CCCLVIII, etc.

45   Frankish evidence for spiritual penalties: e.g., the early private charter, *ChLA* xiv 592
     (above n. 41); Pardessus CCXXX, the will of Bishop Bertramn of Le Mans (615); Angers
     formula i 23, p. 12. Frankish legislation: *Lex Ribuaria* lix, lxi–lxii, ed. F. Beyerle and R.
     Buchner, MGH Leg. Sect. I, iii(2), pp. 106–7, 108–16. Italian documents: Schiaparelli,
     Codice I, pp. 16–19, 29–32, 35–8, etc. (but note that the apparently 'spiritual' *sanctio* of
     the first is expressed in unusually 'secular' terms).

46 *HE* i 27, pp. 49–50.

47 S 66 (685); Brühl, *Codice* 3(1), pp. 3–15; Kölzer, *Urkunden der Merowinger* (cf. n. 40) 81, 108, pp. 205–7, 277–80; F. Prinz, *Frühes Mönchtum im Frankenreich* (Munich, 1965), pp. 169–70.

48 'Historia de Sancto Cuthberto' 5, ed. T. Arnold, *Symeonis Dunelmensis Opera* (2 vols, Rolls Series 75, 1882–5) I, p. 199; cf. E. Craster, 'The Patrimony of St Cuthbert', *EHR* LIX (1954), pp. 177–99, at pp. 180–1; and for this 'Celtic' feature, Davies (as Bibliographical Appendix), pp. 269–70. The St Augustine's charters: S 12 (689), etc., and cf. Marculf i 15, ii 3, MGH *Form.*, pp. 53, 75; Lyminge: S 19 (697) (pl. 5.5), 21 (*ChLA* iii 189) (700×15), 23 (*ChLA* iii 190) (732). Cf. Levison, *Continent*, p. 225, but also Chaplais, 'Augustine', pp. 538–41, and E. Ewig, 'Petrus und die Aposteln als Klosterpatrone im 7. Jahrhundert' (as Bibliographical Appendix), pp. 318–54, at pp. 320–2. It may or may not be coincidence that S 19 is the first English charter in either 'Class I' or 'II' with a vernacular element in its boundary clause.

49 Literacy in an Italian context: Tjäder 8, I, p. 240, though cf. *ChLA* xiii 563. 'Nihil Intulimus': S 71, 1249 (692), 52 (680) – which, however doubtful, has some relationship with S 51; Marculf, i 14 c), p. 52.

50 *Bede, In Ezram et Neemiam*, ed. D. Hurst (CCSL CXIX A, 1969) ii, pp. 312–18, 336–7; cf. R. A. Markus, *Bede and the Tradition of Ecclesiastical Historiography* (Jarrow Lecture, 1975/6), p. 14.

51 HA 1, 4, 7, 9, 15, pp. 364, 367, 370, 373, 380; VC 33, pp. 400–1. Another famous reference to Northumbrian charters is *Vit. Wilf.* 17, pp. 211–12.

52 Ep. Egcb. 10–13, pp. 413–17; I have largely followed Whitelock's translation, *EHD* I 170.

53 Ep. Ecgb. 12, p. 415; cf. *HE* iii 24, p. 178. The clearest statement of the 'immunity' solution was that of Stenton, *ASE*, pp. 307–12.

54 S 20, 245, 23. Cf. Marculf, i 14, pp. 52–3, i 1–4, pp. 39–45.

55 These are the solutions adopted respectively by Vinogradoff/Joliffe and John (as Bibliographical Appendix).

56 *Lex Salica* lix, ed. K. A. Eckhardt (MGH, Leg. Sect. I iv, 1962), pp. 222–4; *Edictum Rothari* 153–71, ed. F. Bluhme (MGH, Leg. in folio IV, 1866), pp. 35–40. For Levy, see Appendix, and his review of D'Ors, *ZRG*, romanistische Abteilung 79 (1962), pp. 479–88 [(reprinted in his *Gesammelte Schriften*, 2 vols, Cologne, 1963) I, pp. 305–13; his review of *Tablettes Albertini* is the most important discussion of the law of these texts, *ZRG*, rom. Abt. 70 (1953), pp. 499–507, *Gesammelte Schriften* I, pp. 313–20.]

57 S 259 (749) is the first example in 'Class II'; interestingly, the charter is unique in using Bede's definition of a 'Hide'.

58 HA 11, pp. 374–6, and chapter 1 above, pp. 12–14. The passage in the 'Dialogue' of Egbert, recipient of Bede's letter, about dividing Church lands between heirs, *Councils*, p. 408, makes more sense if heredity were an ingrained social principle than if the Church brought it in. Jack Goody's startling book, *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe* (Cambridge, 1983), does argue that the Church had a 'property strategy', but one designed to frustrate rather than encourage the kin.

59 *Leges Liutprandi* 6, ed. Bluhme, p. 109; C. Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy* (London, 1981), pp. 43, 126.
60 S 89; cf. S 1411 (757×75), 1257 (781), with Sims-Williams, 'Cuthswith . . .' (as Bibliographical Appendix), also above, ch. 3. The argument adopted here is a central thesis of ch. 2, above, and cf. ch. 7 below.

PART II

The Impact of Bede's Critique

5

Æthelwold and his Continental Counterparts: Contact, Comparison, Contrast

Æthelwold's life more or less spanned the tenth century, the *siècle de fer*. It is not surprising that this sombre assessment of the age is most familiar in French. On the whole, it was a poor century for French kingship, as the Carolingian dynasty came to an end (if rather less messily than most French dynasties). The phrase was originally coined by Cardinal Baronius, who went on to call it 'leaden' too. This doubtless reflected the Holy See's embarrassment at the alleged antics of its popes, which would give Gibbon as much fun as the seedier late Roman emperors. Elsewhere the outlook was considerably brighter. In Germany and England, the rise of new monarchies was boosted by unprecedented triumphs over old and much-feared enemies. Otto the Great and Edgar the Peaceable were consciously heirs to what the Franks appeared to have lost. Three of the century's more positive aspects are highlighted by the life of Æthelwold. One is the spectacular economic growth, marked by both urbanization and monetarization, of the lands controlled by successful rulers. Æthelwold is actually the first Englishman known to have been born in a town, and his Winchester was as conspicuous a beneficiary of commercial development and royal patronage as Otto's Magdeburg. A second is the ordeal, to be seen as a confident effort to channel divine intervention into societies perceived literally as theocracies. Appropriately, the *siècle de fer* was the century *par excellence* of the ordeal: at one end of the German empire, a missionary was said to have converted the Danish king by carrying the hot iron unscathed, and at the other, Otto scandalized the bookish Italian lawyers by formally introducing the judicial duel. An extraordinary incident in Æthelwold's *vita* saw the saint insist that one of the monks who was exceptionally competent in the kitchen (and who later became bishop of Ramsbury) prove the obedience that he had previously 'stolen' from Æthelwold in that he had exercised it behind his back, by drawing a morsel from out of a boiling cauldron. The third is the subject of this book. For English

historians, the tenth century is above all one of 'Reformation', the enforcement of Benedictine observance upon the religious life which, to judge from his memorials, was the main inspiration of Æthelwold's life. On the continent, likewise, the century was pre-eminent among those dubbed 'Benedictine' by Cardinal Newman. It began with the foundation of Cluny; it saw movements of Benedictine reform in most of Latin Christendom; and it concluded with the first stirrings of monastic revival among the Normans – a people, as the apostle of their reform was said to have remarked, hitherto renowned for a rather different kind of interest in monasteries.[1]

But Æthelwold's European context is not just an agreeable backcloth to our portrait. For Æthelwold, as for most major Anglo-Saxon churchmen, continental scenery is an important part of the picture. It is as meaningless to deny religious change its external inspiration, at almost any stage in the history of the British Isles, as it is to monitor modern European economies without regard to Wall Street. Æthelwold's *Regularis Concordia* admitted a debt to continental movements. But, as Professor Bullough has said, ' "England and the Continent in the Tenth Century" is one of the unwritten works of early medieval historiography.' Much has been written on the Anglo-Saxon and European reforms in English and continental languages respectively; but there is no Levison to link the two worlds, then and now. Further, the very exercise of cross-channel comparison gives a third dimension to English patterns otherwise visible only in two. This is especially useful for the 'Tenth-Century Reformation', where the sources are so one-sided. We may suppose that the range of reforming ambitions and counter-reforming challenges was broadly the same on the continent as in England (just as it was half a millennium later); so the much richer European material raises a wider range of questions than we can ask of insular evidence alone. Moreover, as I have argued before, 'one of the advantages of considering early English history in the widest possible continental context is that one then sees not only what is (often surprisingly) similar, but also what is significantly different.' A continental perspective brings out precisely those English phenomena which cannot be passed off as manifestations of the *Zeitgeist* (always a temptation in this sort of exercise), and which cry the louder for explanation. Such considerations determine the structure of this paper. The first part attempts an introduction to six European reformers, whose names are better known than their records. Three issues follow: a probable instance of continental influence on Æthelwold's objectives; an area where his approach is profitably compared with foreign models; and a discrepancy between him and his continental counterparts which seems to arise from his English background.[2]

I begin, as one so often must with the major themes of medieval European history, in the age of Charlemagne. Among the young bloods at the Frankish court in the 760s was a Visigothic aristocrat apparently called Witiza, but known to Ardo his biographer, to his contemporaries and to history by the significant name of Benedict. Like Æthelwold's, Benedict's spiritual life began at court. But unlike Æthelwold's (at least as reported), Benedict's was a personal conversion born of the

realization that honour was laboriously attained and swiftly lost, which he concealed from his father until he was safely tonsured at St Seine near Dijon (774). His monastic life was at first notably austere: he preferred the models of Basil and Pachomius to St Benedict's Rule, which he regarded as fit only for novices and the sick. Even when he warmed to it, graduating, as Ardo says, from single combat to public warfare, 'he declined a little from the rigour of his first conversion because he had taken on an impossible task, but his will remained the same': to the end of his life, like Æthelwold, he refused four-footed flesh and had chicken soup only when ill. Offered the abbacy of St Seine, he preferred to return to his homeland and found a tiny cell on family property at Aniane. Yet celebrity was thrust upon him, as on so many heroes of monastic history. Aniane had to be rebuilt repeatedly to accommodate his following, which reached three hundred (Ardo among them). He inspired the conversion to religious life of William of Gellone, founder of the ducal house of Aquitaine. He secured a royal charter from Charlemagne, intended (said Ardo) to protect his monastery from the claims of his kin, and in fact guaranteeing the election of its abbot according to St Benedict's Rule. He was given other monasteries to reform or establish. In a probable echo of the original Benedict, he was said at the end of his life to have had twelve monasteries under his rule, and he kept them under close supervision, to the extent of appointing their abbots as Æthelwold did (and as St Benedict had done, whatever his Rule said). It was arguably a tribute to his efforts that the Council of Chalon in 813 expressed satisfaction with monastic standards throughout the southern region that was its remit, unlike the four councils held elsewhere in Francia that year.[3]

When Louis, who, as sub-king, had backed Benedict's work in the Midi, succeeded his father at Aachen, he founded a monastery for him at nearby Cornelimünster, and invited him to do for Frankish monasticism as a whole what he had already done in the south. The result was a remarkable burst of Aachen legislation, now expertly disentangled and dated 816–19.[4] This for the first time drew a firm line between monks professing the Rule of St Benedict, and canons or 'clerici', living a communal life which nevertheless allowed for the retention of personal property, and for pastoral work in the Church at large. Thus the many communities which had other than truly monastic priorities were given their own code of observance based on the Rule for canons produced two generations before by Chrodegang of Metz.[5] For monks proper, the obligatory Rule of St Benedict was accompanied by an equally binding customary which supplemented and partly superseded it. The liturgy was to be that of St Benedict, but a number of prayers and rituals were added; eating fowl was forbidden except for the sick, as in Benedict of Aniane's own lifestyle, then permitted, on reflection, for eight days at Christmas and Easter, which were then cut to four.[6] Ardo calls this customary a 'capitularem institutum', and there is evidence that it was enforced by *missi*, like other royal legislation. The idea was that 'just as there was one profession for all, so there should also be one health-giving custom [*una salubris consuetudo*]'; the effect was that 'all monasteries

were so arrayed *ad formam unitatis* as if they were set up by one master and in one place.'[7]

Benedict's career is marked by several paradoxes. Known as 'Benedict II' to some contemporaries, he has been accused by some later Benedictines of betraying the spirit of the first Benedict's Rule.[8] Hailed by the monks of Cornelimünster in the letter communicating to Ardo the exact date of his death (11 February 821) as 'he . . . through whom the Lord Christ has restored the Rule of St Benedict in the whole kingdom of the Franks', and the leader of a reform generally represented at the time as a recovery of 'pristine' standards, he is perceived rather as an innovator by modern scholars, for whom the eighth century is still an age of the 'Regula Mixta'.[9] Finally, though the Aachen legislation exists in seven versions distributed through fifty-one manuscripts (albeit only ten from ninth-century Francia), his quest for uniform observance undoubtedly failed; and while his influence on later reformers is clear (Cluniac sources alone tell us his Visigothic name), it has proved impossible to trace the channels of its transmission.[10] In considering these problems, it is necessary, first, to remember that St Benedict himself allowed his abbots considerable discretion, not least as regards the liturgy so considerably expanded by his namesake. Moreover, the latter was only echoing the former in regarding the Rule as one 'for beginners', and in looking beyond it to the models of Basil and Pachomius. In his *Concordia Regularum*, designed to demonstrate its harmony with other rules, he placed first St Benedict's final chapter, in which the father of western monks directed attention to the superior eastern prototypes; and his encyclopaedic codex of pre-Carolingian rules was a logical follow-up.[11] His reported ambition to bring monastic life within reach of the many rather than the few corresponds with his master's; and while the second Benedict's concessions to Frankish *mores* over a kin's retention of an oblate's family property might not have been endorsed by the first, his inclusion of a prison for delinquent brethren surely met the spirit of the original rule's anxiety lest any professed soul be jettisoned.[12] Benedict of Aniane was thus entitled to the name he took because he was the most prolific western student of monastic literature since Benedict of Nursia, and perhaps he understood the Rule's strengths better than anyone before Dom de Vogüé: in its comprehensive range it was a faithful guide to previous *exempla*, while its flexibility made it adaptable to changing spiritual and social needs.

Nor was the pre-eminence assigned to the Rule in the Aachen legislation entirely new. Other monastic traditions indeed survived in the eighth century, but so they did in the ninth – as the Rule allowed. And explicit references to any other rule than St Benedict's had long since disappeared from Frankish evidence (they are never found in England).[13] St Boniface's councils ordered the reception of St Benedict's Rule for the 'restoration of regular life' in Francia before Benedict of Aniane was born.[14] The reference to the Rule in Charlemagne's charter for Aniane is matched in an earlier original for Hersfeld (775), while both are foreshadowed in the documents of Flavigny.[15] Even if Charlemagne did not ask Monte Cassino for an authentic

copy of the Rule, he certainly despatched a copy, and to the Mount of Olives of all places.[16] Above all, there is little difference of principle – as opposed to detail – between the monastic legislation of Louis the Pious and that of his father. Charlemagne's references to the Rule by name are relatively few, but this hardly means much when it is also absent from Louis' 'Ecclesiastical Capitulary' of 818–19. To judge from a remarkable pair of capitularies where Charlemagne is found scratching his Augustan mane and wondering how St Martin can have been a monk when he preceded St Benedict, he was unaware that any other Rule existed.[17] Even the role of the *missi* in 816–19 was prefigured in 802; and it is evident from the letter in which Alcuin sought a 'third rank', inferior to a monk's but superior to a canon's (the king having observed testily that the community at Tours 'sometimes called themselves monks, sometime canons and sometimes neither'), that the legislative wedge driven in 816 between monastic and canonical models was already being hammered fourteen years earlier.[18]

In this light, the life and work of Benedict of Aniane were symptomatic rather than innovative: he was just the most thorough of those swept up by the monastic currents that had long been flowing towards a codified Benedictine observance. Yet we do seem to hear a new note in the Emperor Louis' reported concern that in his whole kingdom there should be 'nulla varietas' among monks. It was not one rule but one set of customs that was unprecedented, and controversial. Benedict undoubtedly shared – perhaps inspired – the king's passion for uniformity, and this may relate not so much to a specifically monastic conception as to the wider vision of 'Imperium Christianum'.[19] 'Unitas regni – unitas ecclesiae' was the movement's motto, and its failure was simply that of 'Christian Empire' itself. But if many soaring Carolingian ambitions came inevitably to earth, they also left deep ideological imprints. Thus, while Professor Semmler was right to describe the Aachen decrees as 'the first time in the long history of western monasticism than an essentially inner-monastic decree, a *consuetudo*, was a matter of state legislation', he was wrong, as we shall see, to call it 'also the last'.[20]

Among those who did revere Benedict's memory was my second star, Odo of Cluny (d. 942). Odo's *vita* was the work of John of Salerno, whom he had converted from canon to monk. Odo himself told John that he was the son of Abbo, an exceptionally conscientious judge close to Duke William of Aquitaine, in whose household Odo grew up. Abbo had surreptitiously dedicated him to St Martin when no one was watching his cradle, but then withdrew him from 'the ecclesiastical order' and from 'the study of letters' in favour of 'martial exercises' and 'the duties of huntsmen'. However, Odo's spiritual destiny, like Æthelwold's, was foretold by visions, and he proved simply unfit for the young aristocrat's life, returning exhausted from each hunt. Eventually, he was allowed to join the canons of St Martin's Tours, where he developed in St Martin's honour the musical gifts which he shared with Æthelwold.[21] He encountered St Benedict's Rule while browsing in the library, and was so impressed that he misunderstood its provision about sleeping

clothed and refused for three years to change for bed. When told of the existence of genuine Benedictine observance under Abbot Berno at Baume in Burgundy, he rushed to enrol. His old patron, Duke William (descendant of Benedict of Aniane's illustrious convert), had founded a further abbey for Berno at Cluny in 909/10; when Berno died, Odo became its abbot (927). John's *vita* is thenceforth devoted to Odo's labours for reform elsewhere: so closely on his travels did he observe St Benedict's injunction that monks should walk with their heads bowed that he was nicknamed 'the digger' and nearly mugged for his water-bottle. His reputation secured an invitation to make peace between Italy's warring dynasts; thus it was probably Odo, more than three centuries after Gregory the Great, who introduced the Rule to Roman monasteries.[22] But most significant were his encounters with the refined gentlemen at the abbey of Fleury, which was to have such close contacts with English reform. They were decidedly reluctant to abandon the eating of meat, and went so far as to create an artificial fish shortage which St Benedict himself remedied with a draught of Galilean proportions. Moreover, members of the community are said to have dissipated the monastic endowment by treating it as personal property, subject to the rights of kin. Their behaviour is strongly reminiscent of the 'pride, gluttony and avarice' at pre-reform Winchester.[23]

The *vita*'s general impression of Odo's priorities is sustained by Odo's own considerable *oeuvre*. This includes an abridgement, itself massive, of Gregory the Great's towering *Moralia in Job*. It is easy to understand Job's importance for Odo, as a man of wealth and status who received the most drastic lesson in the transitoriness of earthly glory.[24] Job is again prominent in Odo's *Collationes*, whose title and subject-matter (the principal vices) recall Cassian, and which has a message for the men of power and pride in Odo's world: his own adolescent problems are echoed in the story of the priest celebrating mass after a hunt who found himself crying 'Tally-Ho!' at the moment of consecration.[25] Above all, there is his extraordinary *Life of Count Gerald of Aurillac*, another exploration of the evanescent boundary between the worlds of flesh and spirit, but with reference to a holy layman whose example should shame sinful clerics into living the life more properly expected of them: 'it is the very greatest praise to keep the disposition of a religious in a secular habit, just as it is the height of ignominy to have sought the world in the garb of a religious.' Gerald was given an unusually literary education for a nobleman because he was a sickly child; and, as with his exact contemporary King Alfred, his life in secular office confused lay and clerical images to a remarkable degree. His chastity was such that he would not be seen naked, and, when laid out in death, his hand flew to the relevant part of his anatomy. He had his men fight with the blunt end of their spears and the flat of their swords, yet was always victorious, and no more shed his own blood than that of others.[26] And a link between Odo's *Life of Gerald* and his own *vita* is that gentle Gerald was reduced to apoplexy when his men boasted of his miracles, while Odo gave the credit for his own miracles to St Martin. Such reticence is a hagiographical *topos*, but here, as in Æthelwold's *Lives*, it has a special significance.[27]

Modern scholars tend to deny Cluny's revolutionary impact. The *vita Odonis* ascribes the way of life at Baume when Odo joined to Benedict of Aniane: only gradually did Cluniac liturgy expand to its ultimately awesome scale.[28] Again, the arrangement in Cluny's foundation charter whereby the abbey was committed to SS. Peter and Paul, and its immunity protected by papal guarantee, had been anticipated by a number of houses since Pope Nicholas I's privilege for Vézelay *c*.863, including Gerald's Aurillac and another of Berno's abbeys. Cluny's intimate juridical ties with the papacy, and all that flowed from them, developed over half a century after Odo's death.[29] Likewise, the mighty Cluniac connection was an eleventh-century growth; Odo's 'family' of monasteries looks like that of Benedict of Aniane, and when Berno's will claimed St Benedict himself as offering a precedent for appointed rather than elected abbots, he had a point.[30] Finally, Cluny did not break decisively with secular values. If Odo *was* the son of Count Ebbo (Abbo) of Déols, he effectively inherited the abbacy of the latter's foundation of Bourg-Dieu; even if he was not, his closeness to Duke William gave him all too traditional a claim to the succession at Cluny. Throughout its history, Cluny regularly compromised with the rights of lay proprietors.[31]

Yet Cluny did come to seem a turning-point in monastic history; and it had a case for beginning its days of greatness with Odo. It was he that made the Abbot of Cluny a major European figure for the next two hundred years, and thus began the abbey's lavish endowment by Europe's crowned heads.[32] Cluny's extant series of papal charters also began with Odo, and if there was nothing new about papal protection, its privileges soon had special features. One was that John XI's charter of March 931 and Leo VII's charter for Fleury of 938 covered any other monks seeking Odo's rule; this provision was a cornerstone of what would become the Cluniac connection; and, in an age when papal diplomatic often meant rubber-stamping drafts from would-be beneficiaries, it looks like Odo's own idea.[33] Another – also a foretaste of the construction of Cluny's later liberty – was that its bulls covered its new acquisitions in detail, instead of simply renewing its rights in general terms like Vézelay's. Both Odo and Leo VII, the pope responsible for four such charters, plus another for Bourg-Dieu, were protégés of Rome's real ruler, Alberic; and it is surely this personal link that explains a type of papal warranty otherwise rare outside Italy. So the 'special relationship' of Cluny and the Holy See, already acknowledged by John XIII over fifty years before John XIX's better-known pronouncement, may itself have been a function of Odo's international stature.[34] Above all, to see Cluniac monasticism as merely the apotheosis of the *Adelskirche* is to view it upside-down. It appealed so powerfully to the high-born not because it came to an accommodation with this world but because its approach to the next offered spiritual standards with which an aristocracy could identify: a display-conscious class was naturally attracted to its elaborate liturgy.[35] And Odo, with his acute – and presumably innate – sensitivity to aristocratic vices, did much to set this tone. His *vita Geraldi* was scarcely plausible even as an ideal of aristocratic life: what nobleman, even if

prepared to avoid bloodshed, would forgo heirs of his body? Gerald's reported behaviour was not a gentlemanly blend of accepted norms but a heroic stand against them: we are still in the age of 'Epic' rather than 'Romance'. The fact that Odo confronted 'potentes' with a model at once recognizable and rebarbative epitomizes the way in which tenth-century reform, English and European, reached out towards the world of the warrior nobility without abandoning its principles, and was for both reasons successful.[36]

My next *dramatis persona* is Abbo of Fleury, born at about the time when Odo died, and one of the few major early medieval churchmen specifically said not to have been an aristocrat. But Aimo, his biographer, insists that his background was respectable; in particular, one maternal relative was a monk at Fleury and another a 'clericus' in the attached 'schola', which ensured his admission to first the latter, then the former. He became a master of at least five of the seven liberal arts, and could echo Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* in pleading to Kings Hugh and Robert that he 'wished only for the salvation of the monastic senate'.[37] When Archbishop Oswald of York, himself an alumnus, asked Fleury for an expert to teach his new foundation of Ramsey, Abbo was the obvious choice. He was thus the only major continental reformer who actually visited England (985–7), and his fortunes there were mixed: he got on splendidly with Oswald and Dunstan (whose *vita* was in his baggage, for versification, on the day of his death); but whereas he was given gifts by Ealdorman Æthelwine, he received 'only words' from King Æthelred (then in his anti-monastic phase); and he was later to complain that English food, and specifically English beer, made him permanently fat.[38] Elected abbot on his return to Fleury, he became a major public figure: he was in regular touch with Rome, not only on ecclesiastical issues but also on behalf of the new Capetian kings, and even of a relative who, as he put it, was 'both noble and a sinner but rather a sinner because she was noble than noble because she was a sinner'.[39] After sixteen years, he was persuaded to attempt the reform of a Gascon monastery which had resisted the efforts of his three predecessors to make it live up to its name, Réole (the Rule). He joked that he would go when he was tired of life; the joke turned sour when he was killed in a riot caused by his attempt to impose monastic discipline (1004). Aimo planned to write about Abbo's posthumous miracles, but, in keeping with priorities we found in Odo's *vita* he preferred to bring up to date the Miracles of Fleury's patron, St Benedict.[40]

Abbo was perhaps the most intellectually distinguished figure of this paper, and his influence on the English, for whom he wrote his *Quaestiones Grammaticales* (criticizing their archaic pronunciation of Latin) as well as the famous *Passio* of St Edmund, ran deep.[41] But his most important work was probably his Canon Collection, because of its connection with the remarkable charter which Fleury received from the papacy in 996.[42] Papal charters of *protection*, which simply guaranteed a church's property, privileges and way of life against infringement by any power, secular or ecclesiastical, must be distinguished from those of *exemption*,

which removed from a monastery most or all of its diocesan's rights and responsibilities under ancient canon law. Though protection from a bishop's abuse of his position obviously merged into exemption from his exercise of legitimate duties, which is why the issue has been controversial in that day and in this, there was an important difference between the right to elect an abbot without episcopal interference, or to preserve monastic peace from public ceremonial, and the freedom to choose which bishop would bless an elected abbot or remove a bad one: apart from anything else, the first accorded with St Benedict's Rule and the second probably did not.[43] It seems that charters of exemption were granted to monasteries for about a century and a half after the arrival of St Columbanus on the continent (c.590), usually by bishops themselves, but occasionally (as in Bedan Northumbria) by popes: whatever a bishop's theoretical rights, suspicion of episcopal power was deeply embedded in monastic primers like Cassian. But the Carolingian age was no time for restrictions on bishops, and exemption was almost forgotten. Papal charters for Frankish abbeys from the mid-ninth century, including Cluny's, offered protection only.

However, circumstances at the end of the tenth century conspired to resurrect exemption. Abbo himself was on appalling terms with the local bishop of Orleans, whose men actually beat him up. For this reason and others, his canon collection read the letters of Gregory the Great, which really involved no more than *protection*, as if they conveyed *exemption*, and he then sought exemption from the pope. His first approach was rebuffed, more probably because his case in recent canon law was weak than because he failed to offer a bribe, as Aimo insinuates.[44] But the next pope, Gregory V, was the first German to hold the office. The only European abbey which maintained its exemption from all ecclesiastical authority except the pope's throughout the Carolingian period was Fulda; and in the later tenth century other German monasteries received similar bulls, sometimes in conscious imitation of Fulda.[45] This may explain why Abbo's application to a German pope was successful. Fleury's 996 charter removed all diocesan rights: no episcopal function could be performed except by invitation, and its abbot could be tried, even for criminal offences, only by a provincial council or by the pope himself. Whatever the Merovingian background to Abbo's claims, this charter was a watershed in relations between French monasteries and bishops. Within two years, Cluny had a bull which for the first time gave it a choice of visiting prelates; over the following decades, Abbot Odilo and the popes between them established the liberty which ultimately became normative for western monasteries.[46] It can thus be seen that Æthelwold's integration of cathedral and monastery at Winchester ran right against what was soon to become the European trend.

My fourth counterpart to Æthelwold takes us back to the early tenth century and across to the old Carolingian 'Middle Kingdom': the life of Gerard of Brogne is a barometer of political change in this long-disputed area, in that his first royal charter was granted by Charles the Simple shortly before he lost the west Frankish throne,

and his next was issued by Henry the Fowler of the ascendant Saxon dynasty, while his major patron was the semi-independent Count Arnulf of Flanders. Gerard's career is especially elusive: no writings of his own survive, and virtually all the sources for his achievements were tendentiously rewritten, including the Brogne charters and his *vita*.[47] Described as *nobilissimus* in our earliest source, he was apparently, like Odo, the son of an important associate of the major local magnate: the magnate in question was Count Robert, brother of the late King Odo and future replacement for Charles the Simple. When perhaps no more than fifteen, Gerard, like Benedict of Aniane, founded a monastery on his own family property, at Brogne near Namur, where an early Carolingian church now maintained only a token sacerdotal presence (913/14). There is as yet no sign of wider reforming intentions. Gerard's priority was to endow his house with appropriate relics, and from Saint-Denis, where Robert was lay abbot, he secured those of St Eugenius, alleged disciple of St Denis and apostle of Spain. On returning to Brogne, he commissioned an account of the resulting miracles; the fact that, like Æthelwold's, these included the preservation of builders who had come crashing to the ground is a reminder of the architectural ambitions which accompanied monastic reform on both sides of the Channel.[48]

But the political dramas of the 920s gave Gerard new political masters and, for him as for Benedict of Aniane, this meant new responsibilities. Count Gislebert of Lorraine invited him to reform Saint-Ghislain, which inspired a collection of this saint's *miracula*.[49] Count Arnulf called him in on a number of restorations, including those of Saint-Bertin (944), whose recalcitrant brethren sought the patronage of the English King Edmund, and St Peter's Ghent (941), where Dunstan was shortly to find his own refuge. For Ghent, we have Arnulf's original diploma, stipulating the adoption of the Benedictine Rule with special reference to the election of abbots, but with a clause reserving comital rights which monks of the Gregorian period tried indignantly to erase.[50] On his own initiative, Gerard offered the relics of St Wandrille to the Normans in return for the abbey's endowment, but the bargain fell foul of the many vested interests involved. Tenth-century reform was everywhere entwined with the cult of the Church's local heroes, and it is symbolic that the *miracula* and *translationes* of others are better evidence for Gerard than his own *vita*.[51] Perhaps it also makes the point that his achievements were more transitory than the others reviewed here; his work at Saint-Rémi Rheims had to be redone from Fleury, and Ghent was to be reformed again by the movement to be considered next. But it is hard to forget the tribute penned three years after his death (959) by Folcuin: 'In recent times, he was the first, and almost the only one, to preserve the norm of regular life in these western areas.'

John of Gorze, my fifth personality, was from Lorraine, also in the Middle Kingdom, and, in the next century, a well-spring of 'Gregorian' reform. He poses the opposite problem to Gerard. His biography, which John of St Arnulf's agreed to write at the behest of the other abbots around his deathbed (976), is one of the great

vitae of the early Middle Ages, but it has not been edited since 1841, nor translated from its very challenging Latin; and the movement he belonged to has inspired surprisingly little modern literature.[52] The obvious exception, Dom Hallinger's study of the Gorze connection in antithesis to Cluny's, may have made matters worse: an early critic had 'the vague feeling that the last word on every detail has not yet been spoken', but one can understand the general reluctance to add to Hallinger's verbal mountain.[53] John was not an aristocrat, but his background was comfortable: he was formally, if in his own view fruitlessly, educated; and when transferring his patrimony to his community, he could price it at thirty pounds of silver. In the *vita*'s account of his life as a layman, and in its vignettes of his future colleagues, we find a restless search for spiritual perfection. Like many monastic movements since Egypt, including St Benedict's, the Lotharingians began with experiments in the hermit's life; and John's austerities always transcended the demands of the Rule, though, like Benedict of Aniane and Æthelwold, he expected less of others.[54] The need for spiritual companionship drew him and his like-minded friends together, but they found no local centres of suitably regular life. They had already visited Rome and Monte Cassino, and were on the point of permanent departure for Italy, when Bishop Adalbero of Metz was made to see the shame of losing such men from his diocese, and offered them nearby Gorze. He had previously vowed to restore the once great foundation of Chrodegang of Metz, now the home of just a few who were monastic in dress but little else, with its shrines stained by animal droppings and its walls bare, and with its properties held in benefice by a lay abbot, the ferocious Count Adalbert. John, for his part, cheerfully accepted the bishop's offer because he remained determined to leave and confidently expected the plan to be aborted by Adalbert's veto. However, the new community was somehow established, with Einold, an archdeacon of Toul who had opted for a less Trollopean spiritual life, as abbot, and with John in charge of external administration (933). 'The garb of clerics' was exchanged for the 'monastic habit', and those who survived from the old dispensation were obliged to join the new.[55] The many parallels here with the circumstances of the refoundation of Abingdon and the purge of Winchester include the possibility that Gorze sources also give too desolate and/or dissolute an impression of pre-reform conditions: Adalbert and the 'brothers of the monastery' had issued a charter amidst Gorze's allegedly unadorned brick and dung-bedecked altars as recently as 922.[56] For this Reformation, as for others, reformers are not always the best authorities.

   John was eventually to be abbot of Gorze, but his biography did not reach that point, breaking off with a vivid account of his conduct as Otto's ambassador to the Khalifh of Cordova: chosen for the job as one 'eager to be a martyr', it was no fault of his that he failed to become one.[57] In the hagiographical *tour de force* on John's life as a monk, three things are especially notable. The first is his reading: like Odo's, this comprised Gregory's *Moralia*, which he allegedly had at his finger-tips, and a striking set of early monastic *vitae*, including Anthony, Macarius, Pachomius,

Martin, Germanus and even John the Almsgiver. The second is his business acumen, comparable with that of Æthelwold and Abbot Brihtnoth as recorded in the Ely *Libellus*. He used as monastic bursar the skills he had acquired in managing his family property and that of others (and went a step further than most bursars in cleaning the latrines).[58] In a series of confrontations with possessors of lands claimed by Gorze, he showed shrewdness and courage, though it fits with the pattern we have encountered above that achievements put down by his biographer to him were ascribed, in a work which John may have written himself, to the *miracula* of Gorze's patron, St Gorgonius.[59] The third is Gorze's role as an exporter of reform. The *vita* says something of this: the houses mentioned include St Arnulf's Metz, of which its author was abbot, and there were more, like St Peter's Ghent.[60] But it is clear that Hallinger massively exaggerated Gorze's influence; for example, St Maximin's Trier, the real nucleus of his Gorze connection, as he admits, seems to have reformed itself without much Gorze assistance, and was so much the stronger house at first that Einold was tempted to decamp thither.[61] The very idea of a 'Gorze connection' may be misconceived, if what distinguished it from Cluny's was the looseness of its links, for Cluny's especially tight *familia* did not appear until the eleventh century. Yet Hallinger's book is at least a suitably imposing monument to the vitality of monastic reform in the Ottonian *Reich*; and the important point may be that it had no one source. The movement attracted the interest of kings and bishops, and was criss-crossed by spiritual and genealogical affinities; but tenth-century reform did not always need central direction in order to flourish.

Among its offshoots was my sixth man of the hour, Archbishop Adalbert of Magdeburg (d. 981). Unlike the others, he was not seen as a saint, and if this is itself a good reason for including him, it also means that he inspired no *vita* and must be more summarily discussed.[62] He was certainly of noble birth and perhaps Lotharingian origin: his father was conceivably the very Adalbert who had been lay abbot of Gorze. If so, he was another who turned against the paternal model, and in about 950 he joined St Maximin's Trier.[63] Like Æthelwold, he was both monk and bishop. A self-confessed failure as missionary to the Russians (though he confirmed and gave his name to the young Slav noble who was to become the martyred St Adalbert of Prague), he was still Otto's choice for his cherished new archbishopric of Magdeburg; as such, he remained, like Æthelwold, a sedulous visitor of monasteries, sometimes arriving at dead of night to ensure that monks got up for Matins.[64] He was also a major historian. His continuation of Regino of Prüm's Chronicle blends interest in reform with devoted support for the Saxon dynasty's claims to God-given hegemony.[65] Here too there is an analogy with Æthelwold. Finally, he was a charter specialist; and his periodic rather than continuous spells in the Ottonian chancery may have a bearing on the much-debated production of royal charters in tenth-century England. The charters which, like Æthelwold, he drafted for his own house, drew on the remarkable chain of forged documents whereby St Maximin's, in dispute with the local archbishop, extended its privileges back through the Carolingians

and Merovingians to Constantine and Helena.[66] The abbey had sustained a traumatic Viking visitation in 882, and though its library may not have been totally destroyed (the one extant manuscript of Benedict of Aniane's monastic encyclopaedia was possibly preserved there), its muniments evidently were.[67] English minsters had the same problems, and we shall see that it elicited a similar response.

We must now turn to the three aspects of Æthelwold's policy which a European setting may help us to understand. The first illustrates that continental influence on English reform nicely symbolized by the story in Odo's *vita* of how St Benedict appeared in a vision to announce that he was late for his festival at Fleury, because he had been over in Britain wrestling with demons for the soul of a backsliding brother called Leutfred. Such influence, though never in doubt, has yet to be explored as thoroughly as it could be.[68] One matter on which more can be said is the sources of the *Regularis Concordia*. A lifetime's study persuaded the text's editor, Dom Symons, that Lotharingian or 'Gorze' models predominated over those of Cluny and Fleury; and because Dunstan had been at Ghent, a daughter of the Brogne and Gorze families, whereas Æthelwold's links were with Fleury, he thought that Dunstan must have had a part in the *Concordia*'s composition, despite the strong evidence that Æthelwold wrote it.[69] As Stenton saw, a mixture of traditions is only to be expected in what was an agreement, and there were Ghent brethren at the Winchester synod that produced it, so Lotharingian symptoms are no argument against Æthelwold's 'pen'.[70] More important, it is even harder to be sure of anything in this field than Symons stressed. There is no question of extant 'sources': the *Concordia* is earlier in date than any of the other monastic customaries at issue, and the argument has to be based on parallels with later documents. The reason why there are more parallels with Lotharingian than with Cluniac usage may be that statements of the former are themselves earlier, so less liturgically developed, than those of the latter; and they are much more like the *Concordia* in their general scope, so there is more opportunity to find parallels. Since Symons wrote, a more nearly contemporary record of Fleury customs has come to light, increasing the evidence for their influence on the Winchester synod; and while it remains clear that 'the Fleury party was oftentimes outvoted', the most suggestive single echo of continental practice in the *Concordia* points in their direction.[71]

But the most interesting potential parallel to the *Regularis Concordia* lies in neither Lotharingian nor Cluniac customaries but in that of Benedict of Aniane. Half a dozen manuscripts of the 816–19 legislation survive from the last century of the Anglo-Saxon Church, five of its final authoritative form, and one a unique record of the earliest stage in the Aachen proceedings. All appear to date from after 970, but this only shows that they were seen as an integral part of the reforming programme; in one, the Aachen *capitula* and the *Regularis Concordia* are bound together.[72] And though the manuscripts all belong to the same general family, the interest in the material was such as to absorb more than one textual tradition: to revert to the issue of 'fowl', one text allows its consumption for *eight* days after major

feasts, one for *four*, while others leave the number to the abbot's decision.[73] One of these manuscripts comes from Abingdon, while three may have a Winchester provenance, so there is a real possibility that the author of the *Concordia* had a particular interest in the Aachen decrees.[74] Symons himself thought their detailed influence on the *Concordia* slight. But he also noted that the so-called *Memoriale Qualiter* was 'the only monastic document of which we can affirm with certainty that it has been extensively used in the composition of the *Concordia*'; and the Abingdon manuscript actually ascribes part of the *Memoriale* to the 'Emperor Louis'. Æthelwold could thus have thought, however wrongly, that he was modelling the English customary on the Carolingians.[75]

More important than liturgical detail is the whole idea of a *consuetudo* for all, endorsed and enforced by secular authority. Adherence to the Rule of St Benedict was universal in tenth-century monasticism, and the general influence of Benedict of Aniane, especially on the liturgy, is as evident in the Lives of Odo or John of Gorze as in England.[76] But England was the only place in post-Carolingian Europe where monastic uniformity was a matter of political principle. As the *Concordia* says: '[The king] urged all to be of one mind as regards monastic usage . . . and so, with their minds anchored firmly on the ordinances of the Rule, to avoid all dissension, lest differing ways of observing the customs of one Rule and one country [*patriae*] should bring their holy conversation into disrepute.'[77] These sentiments recall Benedict of Aniane's obsession with the '*forma unitatis*'. For the Carolingians, religious uniformity was a function of their pastoral imperialism: diversity of practice was intolerable for a regime seeking to enforce God's law. English kings from Æthelstan's time also thought that God had given them an 'empire', as their charters show. Whatever the exact meaning of Edgar's coronation in 973, its liturgy certainly drew on Carolingian models, and it is surely no coincidence that it took place at Bath, whose hot springs must have recalled those which attracted Charlemagne to Aachen (as the English could have read in Einhard).[78] In pointing to the Anglo-Saxon copies of the Aachen decrees, Mary Bateson long ago suggested that 'what Benedict did at the council of (Aachen), Æthelwold did at Winchester', and it seems more than likely that both Æthelwold and his royal master consciously adopted the Carolingian ideology of a Christian Empire, serving one God, one king and one Rule. In the sixteenth century, English monasticism went down before the principle that 'this realm of England is an Empire'; five and a half centuries earlier, that very principle, differently envisaged, demanded uniform monastic observance.

The continental context is a potential source of influence on English developments.[79] It also puts them in proportion. Scholars have tended to stress the uniquely English features of the 'Tenth-Century Reformation', above all its close links with the king. The *Regularis Concordia*'s provisions on regular prayers for the royal family are unparalleled in other customaries, and it is suggested that the patronage which Cluny had from the pope, or Gorze from the bishop of Metz, was exercised in

England by Edgar and his successors. A recent refinement of this thesis dwells on the common interest of king and monks in reform: like Fleury's meat-eaters, the 'corrupt' English houses represented the investment of local aristocracies in the Church, and their replacement by authentic monks gave the king grateful representatives in such politically sensitive areas as the West Midlands or East Anglia.[80] Yet further comparison between England and the continent raises doubts about aspects of this approach. For instance, the contrast between reform's defence mechanisms on either side of the Channel can be overdrawn. No reform in monastic history was more closely tied to kingship in theory and practice than that of Benedict of Aniane, and intercession for king and '*patria*' had been inherent in the privileges of Frankish monasteries since the days of Marculf.[81] Cluny's foundation charter prescribed prayers for the late King Odo, and King Ralph, his niece's husband, was an early patron of the abbey. Its immunity was confirmed by Louis IV and Lothair; and if royal guarantees seemed irrelevant thereafter, this was because Capetian protection was hardly worth the parchment it was written on (though Robert II was asked and did his best).[82] At Fleury, it was initially the unreformed who tried to sue a royal charter against Odo, but the intervention of Duke Hugh of the Franks probably did as much as Odo's arrival on a donkey to undermine resistance. Fleury's 938 bull explicitly approved the past and future exercise of royal authority.[83] Abbo himself was usually a loyal servant of the Capetians, seeking their help against his bishop before he turned to Rome; judging by some parts of his canon collection, he was another of those prototypes of Gregory VII who were less aware than posterity of the way his ideas were going.[84] Gerard of Brogne depended heavily on the support of Arnulf of Flanders and of West and East Frankish rulers behind him; Louis IV's interest in Ghent was marked, which presumably means that it was mutual.[85] Gorze's bull may have verbally echoed a royal charter, and the normal pattern in the *Reich* was for popes to follow the king's cue.[86] And no tenth-century monk was more intimately involved with kings than Adalbert.

Contrariwise it deserves more emphasis than it often gets that Æthelwold had papal as well as royal approval for drumming the 'clerks' out of Winchester; and though Glastonbury's bull is dubious, the letter in which a Pope John reproved the depredations of an Ealdorman Ælfric at its expense is comparable with those issued in similar circumstances for Cluny.[87] It has been argued that papal protection became more common on the continent because kings were increasingly unable to offer protection themselves. Thus stated, the proposition is somewhat paradoxical: to quote Stalin, 'how many divisions has the Pope?' The growing appeal of papal sanctions in ninth-century Francia is more plausibly linked with the ideological climate of the False Decretals: the Church had a right and duty to safeguard its property, which certainly did not mean that kings did not. In tenth-century Germany, royal and papal protection were seen as complementary, and kings encouraged the reinforcement of their guarantees by popes.[88] At Cluny, the point is not that bulls replaced royal charters, but that, after 987, royal charters were

useless; moreover, once exemption became an issue, only bulls would do. On the continent, then, papal privileges were intended as supplements, not substitutes, for secular support; they assumed real prominence, *when*, rather than necessarily *because*, there was little else. Against this background, the relative rarity of bulls like Æthelwold's in pre-Conquest England is unsurprising.[89] Not only was royal power as formidable as Charlemagne's; the movement's ideology was also early, not late, Carolingian; and the proposed relationship of monk and bishop made exemption unthinkable. All pre-Gregorian reformers were royalist by inclination, papalist only by circumstance. In England, none of the relevant circumstances arose.

A second problem is the role of aristocrats as opponents of reform. On the continent as in England, this was real enough, though the continental pattern does not quite justify the modern tendency to replace the Vikings with the aristocracy as the villains of ecclesiastical decline: Odo's *vita* is among other evidence that demoralization caused by external assault was an important first stage in the process.[90] But the emphasis on freedom of election in privileges of reformed abbeys from Charlemagne's time was usually directed against the claims of founder's kin, as Ardo's gloss on Aniane's charter shows; and in any reasonably endowed house this kin was almost certain to be aristocratic. 'The lordship of lay persons [*saecularium prioratus*]' was the *Regularis Concordia*'s version of the lay abbacy so much criticized on the continent from Carolingian times; again it was noblemen (and also kings) who were the guilty parties, and noblemen (and kings) who swallowed monastic endowments.[91] We catch clear echoes of the putative English alliance of sound churchmanship and good government against the aristocratic threat to both when holy Gerald spurns the Duke of Aquitaine's invitation to desert the king's service for his own, or when Abbo observes that unreformed Réole has so strong a site as to make its owner 'more powerful than the king of the Franks in these parts'. Yet Gerald's Duke of Aquitaine was William, the very founder of Cluny, and reform at Réole was first solicited by Duke William Sanchez of Gascony.[92] We can go too far with Abbo's witty diptych about sin and nobility, and our assessment of reform may be too much affected by our instinctive sympathy for royal and central, rather than aristocratic and local, power.

Consider three chapters in the early history of Lotharingian reform. Bishop Adalbero is a curiously ambivalent figure in the Gorze evidence. He was very nobly born indeed, and his responsibilities as lord to holders of Gorze benefices cut right across his commitment to the abbey, so that he had to be sharply nudged to keep his promises; but this did not permanently tarnish his fame as its second founder.[93] Another to fall foul of John (and St Gorgonius) in pursuit of Gorze claims was Boso II, descendant of the abbey's ninth-century lay abbots. Boso was actually the brother of the King Ralph whose support was so useful to Cluny; but we now know that Ralph's support was no less self-centred than Boso's opposition, just because one was a king, the other not.[94] Finally, there is the curious story of Count Gislebert of Lorraine and St Maximin's Trier. For John's *vita* he was a supporter of

reform, but Adalbert gives the credit to King Henry the Fowler, while the St Maximin's account itself has the monks appealing vainly to Henry against the oppressions of the count, whose attitude is altered by a nocturnal visit from St Maximin in person. The latest discussion favours Adalbert's version. But Gislebert's subsequent rebellion (on which Adalbert is a detailed and hostile authority) gave him better reasons for selecting his facts than the other sources; and the St Maximin's story has the ring of truth – not least in that the same sort of tale was told in the presumably independent account of the count's part in the reform at St Ghislain (which has itself been discounted because of his 'bad character').[95] The fact is that there was room in the behaviour of all powerful men, whether bishop, king or nobleman, for inconsistency, tunnel vision and bad conscience; equally, self-interest advised no one to annoy saints, living or dead. So it is in England: Æthelwine, *amicus Dei* for Byrhtferth of Ramsey, was no friend to Ely; and Ælfhere, Ramsey's villain, was at least a patron of Glastonbury. There was no 'pro-monastic' nor 'anti-monastic' party as such; and if Ælfhere supported the queen's faction after Edgar's death, Bishop Æthelwold was probably his ally.[96]

One important trend in the study of the early medieval Church since the discovery of the *Eigenkirche* has been to relate what reformers criticized to the structure and values of elite society. But neither in England nor on the continent can reform be seen as an attack on the aristocracy as a class. On the contrary, the participation of the aristocracy was ultimately a much more important reason for the success of tenth-century reform than any amount of royal or papal support: one could almost say that the reason why there was a tenth-century Reformation was that a very large number of aristocrats betrayed their class-interest in the Church. Cluny had roughly equal numbers of royal and papal charters by the late eleventh century, but its colossal cartulary is mainly a monument to the Burgundian nobility. There were over 80 outright lay gifts to the abbey in the seventeen years before Odo's abbacy, over 140 during it; and it was Cluny documents that gave Georges Duby his mirror of '*La Société mâconnaise*'.[97] If England looks different, that is because Anglo-Saxon diplomatic is so king-centred. As it is, almost all secular wills include bequests to reformed houses, and the records of Ely and Ramsey show much more than the aristocratic backsliding they are famous for.[98] Above all, Benedict of Aniane, Odo, Gerard of Brogne and Adalbert were themselves of high birth, and reacted consciously (or subconsciously) against their background; the ambience of Fleury and Gorze was equally aristocratic; and we should surely say the same for Æthelwold and his colleagues. Christianity has always inspired spectacular renunciations of wealth. It was meant to. Pressures building up inside the walls of privilege can be as explosive as the resentments of those shut out of them. 'The alternation of headlong violence with abrupt acts of remorse and atonement' was a feature of the age, because a heroic society, with a cult of the grand gesture and of the struggle against odds, faced an as yet quite unresolved tension between a brutal reality and the intolerably immediate ideals of the New Testament. The essence of 'Cluny' and

what it stands for was that such reactions were now given a communal focus which was both spiritually and socially elitist.[99] The religious history of the barbarian West remains unintelligible unless we reckon with tormented aristocratic minds as well as vested aristocratic interests. One tormented mind was probably Æthelwold's.

If the continental perspective adds depth to our perception of English developments, it also isolates what is odd. The distinctively English feature of English reform is not so much the part played by kings at the expense of aristocrats in a community like unreformed Winchester, as the character of the reformed community that took its place. It has long been acknowledged that there was no real European parallel to the cathedral-monastery which Æthelwold created by installing monks in the Old Minster and which he specifically allowed for in the *Regularis Concordia*; but much more attention has been given to the question of when and how Worcester and Canterbury followed suit than to noting how very odd an arrangement it was in European terms.[100] When reform again came to English cathedral closes under Edward the Confessor, Chrodegang's Rule for canons was used: why did Æthelwold not do the same (confining his monastic zeal to the New Minster next door)? The monastic life was certainly thought superior to the canonical, which is why John of Salerno was grateful for his own conversion. By Gregorian times, canons were under acute suspicion, an attitude which coloured most of the rewritten sources for Gerard of Brogne. The reason why the survivors at Gorze had to become monks was that Gorze and the other houses concerned had (or were believed to have) once been monasteries, and while one might graduate from 'cleric' to monk, it was quite wrong to move in the opposite direction. Whatever else they were, however, these houses were not cathedrals. On the continent, the canonical life was the only model proper for a bishop's *familia*. One of Benedict of Aniane's motives for drawing so careful a line between the respective spheres of monk and canon was to isolate the former from the cares of the Church in the world, which also explains his well-known ban on monastic education for anyone other than oblates; the last thing he had in mind was the mingling of Martha's life with Mary's (to borrow Abbo's image).[101] Behind the quest for exemption lay the conviction that a bishop's world was different from a monk's, and bad for him; and if the Rule envisaged the diocesan's intervention in a real crisis, it certainly said as little as possible about it. But the clearest indication of Æthelwold's eccentricity is what happened at Magdeburg.[102] Adalbert was a monk and the new archbishopric was to be based on the abbey of St Maurice, but it was never once suggested that the monastic community could simply become the cathedral chapter. The chapter *had* to consist of canons, though this meant the transfer of most of St Maurice's monks to a brand new foundation, and a haunted conscience for those who remained, thereby exchanging a superior for an inferior mode of life. For all the extra problems which it would have spared a project that already had its fair share, the Winchester option was not contemplated. Yet Æthelwold turned a cathedral chapter into a monastery. All the signs are that if Dunstan and Oswald hesitated to

follow him, this was because they had been abroad, and knew what continental practice was.

Understanding Æthelwold's extraordinary policy requires awareness that monastic reformers were inspired by more than just the Rule of St Benedict. Like St Benedict himself, Benedict of Aniane, Odo and John of Gorze looked beyond 'the Rule for beginners' to the original pioneers of monasticism, Anthony, Pachomius, Basil and the eastern fathers whose teaching was purveyed by Cassian. Moreover, with Odo, Abbo, Gerard and John, there is a marked interest in local saints, native or imported, whose miracles one way or another eclipsed their own.[103] Æthelwold felt exactly the same sense of debt to the saints of the past: he hushed up his own miracles but trumpeted those of Swithun; and 'Æthelwold's preaching was greatly assisted by the heavenly signs of the holy bishop Swithun.' Swithun perhaps served the same purpose as a common focus of loyalty for reformed and unreformed alike as Martin or Gorgonius.[104] What was special in England was that the reformers had in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* their own 'gallery of good examples' such as continental reformers found in the Desert Fathers, *combined with* an inspiring account of their 'very special dead'. We should thus expect to find that Bede loomed large in the views of Æthelwold and his circle.[105] And further evidence of their sensitivity to the English past comes in the very singular sets of charters from Abingdon and Winchester during or shortly after Æthelwold's time.[106] At the chronological end of each series stand diplomas or writs of the period whose authenticity is beyond much dispute. But they tend to make historical claims, and, as at St Maximin's, these claims are supported by documentary chains, extending back to the seventh century in Winchester's case, and the ninth in Abingdon's. Not only are these chains highly suspect, but it also looks as if they were fabricated at the time the claims were made, because some of the links are extant in hands of this date.[107] Such a thoroughly historical approach to forgery is met nowhere else in Anglo-Saxon diplomatic, so it is at least suggestive that the houses concerned were those most closely associated with Æthelwold. Further, more or less authentic texts for Ely and Peterborough refer explicitly to Bede's testimony; the second of these was very probably Æthelwold's own work, and the first has clear connections with him.[108] In other words, the ideology of reform in Æthelwold's favoured abbeys was powered by a bright version of England's religious history.

There is, however, decisive evidence that Æthelwold had this sort of historical vision: nothing less than a historical work from his own pen. As presented in *English Historical Documents*, this work, now securely attributed to Æthelwold, looks no more than what the editor calls it: 'An Old English account of King Edgar's establishment of monasteries', though it is notable as such for an enthusiasm about Edgar's kingship comparable with Adalbert's commitment to the Ottonians.[109] In fact, it is – or rather was – much more. The extant text begins with a moving account of the conversion of the English and the foundation of many monasteries, taken from Bede. Before the story passes on to Edgar's reign itself,

there is a lacuna, perhaps of one leaf in the manuscript, conceivably of three; we thus lack at least 500, or as many as 1500, words – just over a fifth, or just under a half, of the total. The last word before the break is: 'AC – BUT'. It would seem that what is missing is an account, perhaps quite detailed, of what Æthelwold thought had gone wrong with English monasticism since Bede's day; and it is a fair guess that he here gave the Vikings more of a role than seemed appropriate in the *Regularis Concordia*. Even as the text stands, he represents what happened in the tenth century as a return to Bede's Golden Age; and this is the final clue to the idiosyncratic course that reform took at Winchester.

It should be remembered that some of the sources represent Benedict of Aniane's reforms, however misleadingly, as a restoration of the monastic *status quo ante*. Wherever, then or later, canons were replaced by monks, this was because of a conviction that such places had formerly been monasteries: indeed, where this could not be established – as in Odo's Tours, thanks partly to the confusion caused by Alcuin's agonizings – monasticization never happened.[110] Now, as Bede told the story, almost everyone who was anyone in the first century of the English Church was what he rightly or wrongly called a monk; as if this were not enough, Bede quoted Pope Gregory's injunction in his '*Responsa*' that Augustine must continue, as a bishop, to live the life of a monk with a monastic *familia*, and was so impressed by the arrangement that he twice wrongly compared it with the set-up at Lindisfarne. Further, in his great letter to Bishop Ecgberht, he warmly urged that corrupt and fraudulent monasteries be turned into bishoprics that would do pastoral good.[111] Æthelwold's historical introduction to English monasticism (which is roughly what it was) clearly quotes the relevant Response in its description of Augustine's community at Canterbury; and Symons thought that the *Regularis Concordia* bore traces of the Letter to Ecgberht.[112] On the continent, the monastic chapters established by Boniface and his colleagues were eventually overborne by the Aachen prescription.[113] But in England such arrangements had been endorsed by the national apostle, and a pope at that. The first historian to take the now discredited view that Gregory introduced the Rule of St Benedict into England was Aimo. It is at least a good guess that Abbo had heard this asserted in England.[114] In short, I suggest simply that what Æthelwold did in the Old Minster, unusual even in England and in continental terms bizarre, was because he was himself a historian, soaked in the writings of a historian far greater than he. By the same misinformed logic as prevailed with one-time 'monasteries' in Europe, all English religious communities, including cathedrals, had long ago been 'monastic', and they must all, including cathedrals, become monastic again. The exceptional hold which monasticism now took on the English Church, and which it gradually extended (with Norman help), must be put down to the immortal picture of its origins painted by Bede the monk. This is as striking an illustration as any in English history of how one historian's vision of the past can determine the future. For Æthelwold himself, there is a final possibility. We know that he believed in the

English vernacular, at least for the benefit of the 'ignorant', and that he did as much as anyone after Alfred to make Old English into a literary language.[115] He must have been familiar with the famous words in which Alfred, himself drawing on Bede, described how English 'warfare and wisdom' had once flourished together. Perhaps he aimed to recreate this lost age under Edgar's imperial rule, in the hope (vain as things turned out) that his people could avoid the barbarian onslaught of which Bede had warned, and which Alfred had barely repelled.

It is possible to write early English history without much reference to the Anglo-Saxons' neighbours: great scholars have done so. But something is thereby lost. For Æthelwold, it is a nice point that only from the continental angle can we see how much more than Benedictine *pietas* went into the pursuit of monastic reform, from the dream of Christian Empire to the realization of a great historian's convictions by what was arguably the second most creative historical intelligence that the Anglo-Saxons produced. It is also a satisfying paradox that the effect of viewing Æthelwold from the standpoint of his cross-channel counterparts is to sharpen rather than blur the contours of his intellectual personality, and to bring out a sensitivity to English tradition perhaps even stronger than Dunstan's or Oswald's. Æthelwold was not only the first Englishman known to have been born in a town; he was also the first, after King Alfred, to act decisively on the principle that National Sin (and especially *trahison des clercs*) would mean National Punishment. In neither respect, as the world of learning in 1980s Britain scarcely needs reminding, was he the last.

NOTES

1   On the *siècle de fer* see M. T. Gibson, 'The continuity of learning, *c*.850–*c*.1050', *Viator* 6 (1975), p. 1. For the battle of the Lech, see Widukind, *Res gestae Saxonicae*, ed. H.-E. Lohmann and P. Hirsch, MGH, SRG iii 5, p. 129; and, for the Battle of Brunanburh, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: MS A*, ed. J. M. Bately, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: a collaborative edition*, ed. D. Dumville and S. Keynes, III (Cambridge,

1986), p. 72. For the *translatio imperii* see Widukind i 34, p. 48, and above pp. 179–80 and n. 78. For Æthelwold and the ordeal see *Vita S. Æthelwoldi, in Three Lives of English Saints*, ed. M. Winterbottom (Toronto, 1972), [Wulfstan, *Vita*], ch. 14, pp. 42–3; for Poppo and the Danes, Widukind iii 65, pp. 140–1, and for Otto and the lawyers, C. Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy* (London, 1981), p. 129. For William of Volpiano on the Normans see *Libellus de Revelatione . . . Fiscanensis Monasterii*, PL CL1, col. 721; R. Herval, 'Un moine de l'an mille: Guillaume de Volpiano. Ier abbé de Fécamp', *L'Abbaye de Fécamp: Ouvrage scientifique du xiii centénaire, 658–1958* (Fécamp, 1959), has his doubts, but the story is at least *ben trovato*. See also N. Bulst, *Untersuchunen zu den Klosterreformen Wilhelms von Dijon*, Pariser Historische Studien 11 (Bonn, 1973), pp. 147–9.

2 D. A. Bullough, 'The continental background of the reform', *Tenth Century Studies: Essays in Commemoration of the Millennium of the Council of Winchester and Regularis Concordia*, ed. O. Parsons (Chichester, 1975) p. 20; this paper, marked by deftness of touch as well as weight of learning, is much the best discussion now available in English (though see also n. 29 below), but there is perhaps room for more concessions to the 'Anglorum gentis inertiae'. The other quotation is from my 'Bede and Benedict Biscop', *Famulus Christi,* p. 154 (see p. 14 in this volume), to which this article is in some sense a sequel. The continental literature on almost all matters discussed here is vast. E. Sackur, *Die Cluniacenser in ihrer kirchlichen und allgemeingeschichtlichen Wirksamkeit bis zur Mitte des elften Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols (Halle, 1892–4) may be said to have defined the subject's terms and remains fundamental: I have not henceforth cited its many detailed insights. References to modern literature are generally restricted to (a) works in English, (b) works in foreign languages which seem to me (i) 'strategic', or (ii) in need of rebuttal.

3 Ardo, *Vita Benedicti abbatis Anianensis [VB]*, ed. G. Waitz, MGH, Scriptores XV(1), ch. 1–3, 5–6, 17–21, 24, 30–1, 42, pp. 201–4, 205–10, 211–14, 218–19. MGH, Diplomata Karolinorum [DK], ed. E. Mühlbacher, I 173, pp. 231–3. MGH, Conc., II(1), ed. A. Weminghoff, 37: 22, p. 278, and cf. ibid., pp. 259–60, 289–90. For Æthelwold's appointment of abbots, Wulfstan, *Vita* ch. 21, 23, pp. 46–7; for St Benedict's theory, *La Règle de St Benôit [RB]*, ed. A. de Vogüé, Sources Chrétiennes, 181–6 (Paris, 1971–2), ch. 64, II pp. 648–9; and for his practice, *Grégoire le Grand Dialogues*, ed. de Vogüé, Sources Chrétiennes, 251, 260, 265 (Paris, 1978–80), ii 3, 22, pp. 148–51, 202–3. J. Semmler, 'Benedictus II: *Una regula, una consuetudo*', *Benedictine Culture, 750–1050*, ed. W. Lourdaux and D. Verhelst (Medievalia Lovanensia 11, 1983), pp. 1–49 is an up-to-date summary of the views of the main modern authority on Benedict of Aniane, with full bibliography of his earlier work. See also R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians, 751–987* (London, 1983), pp. 108–24.

4 *VB* ch. 29, 35–9, pp. 211, 215–18. *CCM* I, ed. K. Hallinger, 18–25, pp. 433–561; note that what Ardo says about the lightening of 'munera' on monasteries, ch. 39, pp. 217–18 is reflected in '*Notitia de servitio monasteriorum*', ibid., pp. 483–99. J. Semmler, 'Zur Überlieferung der monastischen Gesetzgebung Ludwigs des Frommen', *Deutschen Archiv* 16 (1960), 310–88 was the pioneering work; note that 10 July 817, the date borne by most MSS of the authoritative text of the monastic decree, was possibly not that of its final promulgation.

5 MGH Conc., II(1) 39, pp. 307–421. J. Semmler, 'Mönche und Kanoniker im Franken-reiche Pippins III und Karls des Großen', *Untersuchungen zu Kloster und Stift*, Veröffentli-chungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte 68 (1980), pp. 78–111. See also

Ch. Dereine, 'Chanoines', *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastique* 12, cols 364–75.

6 *VB* ch. 21, p. 209; *CCM* I 18: 7, 20: 6, 21: 43, 23: 77, pp. 435, 458, 481, 534–5. J. Semmler, '"Volatilia": zu den benediktinischen Consuetudines des 9 Jahrhunderts', *Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens* 69 (1958), 163–76.

7 *VB* ch. 36, p. 215. For the *missi* see (e.g.) *CCM* I 14–15, pp. 331–54; *Vita Hludowici Imperatoris*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH, Scriptores II ch. 28, p. 622; and the texts cited by E. Lesne, 'Les Ordonnances monastiques de Louis le Pieux et la *Notitia de servitio monasteriorum*', *Revue d'histoire de l'Eglise de France* 6 (1920), 173–4.

8 See P. Schmitz, 'L'influence de Saint Benôit d'Aniane dans l'histoire de l'ordre de Saint-Benôit', *Il Monachesimo nell'Alto Medioevo: Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo* 4 (1957), 401–15.

9 *VB* ch. 36, 42, pp. 215, 219; *Cartulaire générale de l'Yonne*, ed. M. Quantin (Auxerre, 1854), 25, p. 49; *Gesta abbatum Fontanellensium*, ed. S. Loewenfeld, MGH, SRG ch. 17, pp. 50–1. J. Semmler, 'Pippin III und die fränkischen Klöster', *Francia* 3 (1975), 130–46 summarizes his oft-repeated views on early Carolingian monasticism.

10 John of Salerno, *Vita S. Odonis [VO], PL* CXXXIII i 22–3, cols 53–4. A. H. Bredero, 'Cluny et le monachisme Carolingien: continuité et discontinuité', *Benedictine Culture* (as n. 3), pp. 50–75. Neither Aniane nor Cornelimünster had the permanent importance of Cluny, Fleury, Gorze, St Maximin's or Abingdon, and Benedict's *vita* was not preserved outside Aniane itself.

11 *RB* ch. 18, 73, II pp. 534–5, 672–5; *VB* ch. 2, 38, pp. 202, 216–17; *Concordia Regularum Patrum*, ch. 1; *Codex Regularum, PL* CIII, cols 717–22, 393–702.

12 *VB* ch. 2, p. 202; *CCM* I 20: 33, 36, 23: 28, 31, pp. 466–8, 523–4; cf. *RB* ch. 23–8, II pp. 542–53. J. Semmler, 'Die Beschlüße des Aachener Konzils im Jahre 816', *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 74 (1963), 45–6, 50–1, and cf. ibid., pp. 53–4 on alcohol.

13 For the eighth century see Semmler (as n. 9) and for the ninth, Semmler (as n. 12). An exception among Charlemagne's authentic diplomas is *DK* I 98, p. 141, an immunity for Farfa of 775; cf. *Marculfi Formulae* I 1, ed. K. Zeumer, MGH, Formulae, p. 39. For England see my 'Bede and Benedict Biscop' (as n. 2), pp. 141–6, and H. Mayr-Harting, *Bede, the Rule of St Benedict and Social Class* (Jarrow Lecture, 1976), pp. 6–10. Cf. W. Ullmann's review of H. Mordek, *Kirchenrecht und Reform im Frankenreich*, *English Historical Review* 92 (1977), 361–3.

14 *Cap.* I 10: 7, 11: 1, pp. 26, 28; cf. *Vita S. Sturmi abbatis Fuldensis*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH, Scriptores II, pp. 371–2, and *CCM* I 13, p. 324.

15 *DK* I 89, pp. 128–9; *Collectio Flaviniacensis* 44, MGH, Formulae, p. 481.

16 MGH, Ep. III, p. 65. For the Monte Cassino letter see *CCM* I 9, pp. 139–75, and for the problems it raises, J. Semmler, 'Karl der Große und das fränkische Mönchtum', *Karl der Große, Lebenswerk und Nachleben, II Das geistige Leben*, ed. B. Bischoff (Düsseldorf, 1965), pp. 264–6; Charlemagne had, in any event, got hold of what apparently was very close to St Benedict's autograph copy: D. Knowles, *Great Historical Enterprises* (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 140–1, 168–9.

17 *Cap.* I 71: 12, 72: 12, pp. 161–2, 164 (on which see F. L. Ganshof, 'Note sur les capitula de causis cum episcopis et abbatibus tractandis', *Studia Gratiana* 13 (1967), 3–25). Cf.

Cap. I 23: 1–16, 25: 3, 28: 13–14, 16, 33: 12, 17, 34: 3–5, 37: 23–4, 138, pp. 63, 67, 75–6, 93–4, 101–2, 105, 108–9, 275–80.

18 MGH Ep. II 247, 258, pp. 400, 416; cf. Semmler (as n. 16), pp. 266–7.

19 *CCM* I 15: 1, p. 341; cf. *Cap*. I 138: 3, p. 276. See the illuminating discussion by T. F. X. Noble, 'The monastic ideal as model for Empire: the case of Louis the Pious', *Revue Bénédictine* 86 (1976), 235–50.

20 Semmler (as n. 4), 386.

21 *VO* Pr., i 3–10, cols 43–8. There is an English translation of the *vita* (and of Odo's *Life of Gerald* – below, n. 26): G. Sitwell, *St Odo of Cluny* (London, 1958). For Odo's music see P. Thomas, 'Saint Odon de Cluny et son oeuvre musicale', *À Cluny: Congrès scientifique... en l'honneur des saints abbés Odon et Odilon*, Société des amis de Cluny (Dijon, 1950), pp. 171–80; it seems to follow from the number of musical works wrongly ascribed to Odo that he was reckoned *maestro*. *À Cluny* is one of the two seminal collections for the modern study of Cluniac monasticism. (For the other see n. 31 below.)

22 *VO* i 15, ii 7–10, 19, 21–3, cols 50, 53, 60, 64–7, 71–6 (note especially the confrontation over foot-washing in cols 73–4). On Odo in Rome, see G. Ferrari, *Early Roman Monasteries* (Vatican, 1950), pp. 30–1, 188, 205, 265, 403, and B. Hamilton, 'The monastic revival in tenth century Rome', *Studia Monastica* IV (1962), 47–9.

23 *VO* iii 8–11, cols 80–3. Cf. iii 4, col. 78 for a brother who claimed that fowl were permitted as having been created on the same day as fish, and choked to death. The parallel between Fleury and Winchester was first drawn by Eric John in his epoch-making article, 'The King and the monks in the tenth-century Reformation', *Orbis Britanniae and Other Studies* (Leicester, 1966), 167–73.

24 *Epitome Moralium S. Gregorii in Job, PL* XCCCIII, cols 105–512; see J. Laporte, 'Saint Odon, disciple de Saint Grégoire le Grand', *À Cluny*, pp. 138–43; and F. Lotter, 'Odos vita des Grafen Gerald von Aurillac', *Benedictine Culture* (as n. 3), pp. 76–95.

25 Odo, *Collationes, PL* CXXXIII ii 34, col 579; cf. i 36, ii 1, 7–9, iii 9, 24–6, cols 544, 549–50, 554–6, 596–7, 607–10. J. Leclercq, 'L'idéal monastique de Saint Odon d'après ses oeuvres', *À Cluny*, pp. 231–2.

26 Odo, *De vita S. Geraldi Auriliacensis Comitis [VG], PL* XCCCIII Pr., i 4–5, 8, 42, ii 8, 16, iii 10, cols 639–40, 644–5, 646–7, 667–8, 675, 679–80, 696; translation as n. 22. See Lotter, 'Odos vita' (as n. 24).

27 *VG* ii 10–13, 20, 23–4, 26, 29–30, 32, cols 676–8, 681–8; *VO* ii 2, 22, cols 61–2, 72–3.

28 *VO* i 22–3, 32, cols 53–4, 57. See also n. 35 below.

29 *Recueil des chartes de l'abbaye de Cluny [Rec. Cl.]*, ed. A. Bernard and A. Bruel, 6 vols, Collection de Documents inédits sur l'histoire de France (Paris, 1876–1903), 112, I pp. 124–8. Vézelay's privilege from Nicholas I is P. Jaffé et al., *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum [J]* 2831, confirmed by John VIII *J* 3189; Gigny's is *J* 3499; for Aurillac's see *VG* ii 4, cols 672–3. See H. E. J. Cowdrey, *The Cluniacs and Gregorian Reform* (Oxford, 1970), pp. xiii–xix for Cluniac historiography, pp. 4–22 for Cluny's place in the history of papal protection; also E. Boshof, '"Traditio Romana" und Papstschutz im 9 Jahrhundert: Untersuchungen zur vorkluniazensischen Libertas', *Rechtsgeschichtliche Diplomatische Studien zu frühmittelalterlichen Papsturkunden*, ed. E. Boshof and H. Wolter, Studien und Vorarbeiten zur Germanica Pontifica, 6 (Cologne, 1976), pp. 1–108.

30   Berno's will is *PL* XCCCIII, cols 853–8. Cf. above, p. 170–1 and n. 3, with Cowdrey, *Cluniacs*, pp. 67–75.

31   J. Wollasch, 'Königtum, Adel und Klöster im Berry während des 10 Jahrhunderts', and H. E. Mager, 'Studien über das Verhältnis der Kluniacenser zum Eigenkirchenwesen', *Neue Forschungen über Cluny und die Cluniacenser*, ed. G. Tellenbach (Freiburg, 1959), pp. 19–165, 169–217. Professor Wollasch's all but conclusive case for Odo's origin depends crucially on the thesis that John of Salerno's chronology was artificially distilled from the Lausiac History on which he had previously been working (at the expense of his digestion); and it does not seem to take account of Sackur's own suggestion, *Die Cluniacenser* I, p. 44, n. 4.

32   King Ralph's grants: *Recueil des Actes de Robert Ier et de Raoul, Rois de France (922–36)*, ed. J. Dufour, Chartes et Diplômes . . . publiés par l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres XI (Paris, 1978), 12, 18, 19 A–B, pp. 47–52, 77–88: the first of these, the earliest extant royal charter for the abbey, coincides with Odo's assumption of the abbacy. Grants by Kings Hugh and Lothar: *Rec. Cl.* 417, I pp. 403–4, and *P. Uk.* (see next note) 81, pp. 137–8. Charters of the Burgundian king Conrad (soon after Odo's death): MGH, *Regum Burgundiae . . . Diplomata et Acta*, ed. T. Schieffer, 27–9 (943), pp. 133–8. However, as pointed out by Cowdrey, *Cluniacs*, p. 16, there were earlier and now lost royal and papal grants.

33   *Papsturkunden, 896–1046 [P. Uk.]*, ed. H. Zimmermann, 2 vols, Veröffentlichungen der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 174, 177 (Vienna, 1984–5), 64–5, 83, pp. 107–10, 140–2; this edition at last makes it relatively easy to see Cluny's papal charters in their diplomatic context. See the discussion of Cluny's 'licence to reform' in Wollasch, 'Berry', pp. 100–5, and Cowdrey, *Cluniacs*, p. 68.

34   *P. Uk.* 73–5, 81–3, pp. 125–8, 137–42; and cf. 58, pp. 96–7 (the first extant papal charter, again coinciding with Odo's election), 67, 95, 130, 188–9, 348, 351, 530, 570–4, pp. 111–12, 167–8, 229–31, 370–3, 676–9, 682–6, 1007–10, 1083–90. For Vézelay in the period see *P. Uk.* 3, 28, 68, 227, pp. 7–9, 50, 112–14, 449–50, etc. It is interesting that another (Italian) house which made a habit of such detailed confirmations was Subiaco, site of St Benedict's first foundation, and also 'protected' by Leo VII: *P. Uk.* 57, 72, 77, 85, 92, 226, pp. 94–6, 120–4, 130–2, 146–8, 162–4, 443–8, etc. On the Odo-Leo-Alberic link see Hamilton (as n. 22), 50–1. And for the use of the 'protection' formulae of the *Liber Diurnus*, ed. H. Foerster (Bern, 1958), 64, 89, pp. 121–2, 169–70, see L. Santifaller, 'Die Verwendung des Liber Diurnus in den Privilegien der Päpste von den Anfängen bis zum Ende des elften Jahrhunderts', *Mitteilungen des österreichischen Instituts für Geschichtsforschung* 49 (1935), 251–74.

35   B. H. Rosenwein, 'Feudal War and monastic Peace: Cluniac history as ritual aggression', *Viator* 2 (1971), 129–57.

36   R. W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (London, 1967 reprint), p. 212.

37   Aimo, *De vita et martyrio S. Abbonis abbatis Floriaci coenobii [VA], PL* XCCCIX 1–3, cols 388–90; Abbo, *Apologeticus*, ibid., col. 461, and cf. *Collectio Canonum*, ibid., Pr., col. 474. P. Cousin, *Abbon de Fleury-sur-Loire* (Paris, 1953) is a useful introduction to *PL* CXXXIX; for several episodes in Abbo's career F. Lot, *Etudes sur le règne de Hugues Capet et la fin du Xe siècle*, Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des hautes études 147 (Paris, 1903) remains fundamental, especially chapter II–IV and Appendices II–IV, pp. 31–157, 266–79.

38 *VA* 4–6, 11, cols 390–3, 401; Cousin, *Abbon*, p. 73, n. 39. Cf. S. D. Keynes,
    The Diplomas of King Æthelred the Unready, 978–1016 (Cambridge, 1980), pp.
    176–86.

39 *VA* 11–12, cols 401–3; Abbo, *Epistolae, PL* CXXXIX 1–4, cols 419–23.

40 *VA* 16–21, cols 406–14; *Miracula S. Abbonis, PL* CXXXIX, cols 413–14, and cf. ibid.
    cols 801–52.

41 Abbo, *Quaestiones Grammaticales, PL* CXXXIX, 1, 10–11, cols 521–3, 528–9; cf. D.
    Norberg, *Manuel pratique de Latin médiévale*, pp. 47–8; Abbo, 'Life of St Edmund', ed.
    M. Winterbottom, *Three Lives of English Saints* (Toronto, 1972), pp. 67–87; E. John,
    'The World of Abbot Ælfric', *Ideal* pp. 303–15.

42 Abbo, *Collectio Canonum, PL* CXXXIX, cols 471–508, especially 5, 15, 17, 21, 23,
    44, cols 479–80, 484–6, 502–4; and cf. *Epistola* 14, cols 440–60; Fleury's privilege is
    P. Uk. 335, pp. 655–7. For what follows the pioneering work was J.-F. Lemarignier,
    'L'Exemption monastique et les origines de la reforme grégorienne', *À Cluny*, pp. 288–
    334; the basis of his case is available in English translation: 'Political and monastic
    structures in France at the end of the tenth and beginning of the eleventh century',
    Lordship and Community in Early Medieval Europe, ed. F. L. Cheyette (New York, 1968),
    pp. 111–20. Cowdrey, *Cluniacs*, pp. 22–36 is an admirably lucid account of
    these matters, and I have reviewed the pre-Carolingian position in 'Bede and Benedict
    Biscop', pp. 146–9, with references, pp. 161–4 (see also pp. 7–10, 19–22 in this volume).
    I differ from Dr Cowdrey chiefly in attaching much more significance to this
    pre-Carolingian phase. He was persuaded by the arguments of W. Schwartz,
    '*Iurisdicio* und *Condicio*', *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, kanonistische
    Abteilung* 76 (1959), 34–98, which seemed to me to take insufficient account of
    the narrative evidence and to postulate far too many forgeries. Schwartz's case was
    already undermined by E. Ewig, 'Klosterprivilegien des siebten und frühen achten
    Jahrhunderts', *Adel und Kirche: Gerd Tellenbach zum 65ten Geburtstag*, ed.
    J. Fleckenstein and K. Schmid (Freiburg, 1968), pp. 52–65; it has now been dealt two
    coups de grâce: E. Ewig, 'Bemerkungen zu zwei merowingischen Bischofsprivilegien und
    einem Papstprivileg des 7 Jahrhunderts für merowingische Klöster', *Vorträge und For-
    schungen* 20: *Mönchtum, Episkopat und Adel zur Gründungszeit des Klosters Reichenau*, ed.
    A. Borst (Sigmaringen, 1974), pp. 215–49; and H. H. Anton, *Studien zu den Kloster-
    privilegien der päpste im frühen Mittelalter*, Beiträge zur Geschichte und Quellenkunde
    des Mittelalters, ed. H. Fuhrmann, 4 (Berlin, 1976). See also H. Edwards, 'Two
    documents from Aldhelm's Malmesbury', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*
    59 (1986), 1–19.

43 *RB* ch. 54–5, II pp. 648–59; cf. A. de Vogüé, *La Communauté et l'Abbé dans la Règle de
    Saint Benoît* (Paris, 1960), pp. 362–6, 430–2.

44 *VA* 6–9, 11–12, cols 392–7, 401–3. In the light of this passage, it hardly seems possible
    to agree with Zimmermann that *P. Uk.* 335 was forged by Abbo, though one can see that
    he might have forged *P. Uk.* 258, pp. 507–9, and perhaps other charters too, in order to
    secure it.

45 Fulda's original charter is in *Die Briefe der heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus*, ed. M. Tangl,
    MGH, Ep. Sel. I 89, pp. 203–5; the ninth-century bulls are *J* 2605, 2668, 2676,
    3020, 3466; those of the tenth century, *P. Uk.* 16, 42, 71, 99, 113, 150, 199,

236, 321, 339, 380, 546, 589, pp. 28, 71–2, 118–20, 174–5, 198, 274–5, 394–5, 470–1, 626–8, 662, 733–6, 1036–8, 1111–12. Fulda's diplomatic history is highly complex, consisting as it does of two series of privileges, one largely fabricated and the other often interpolated; but even on an adverse verdict, the core of the case made by H. Goetting, 'Die klösterliche Exemtion in Nord- und Mitteldeutschland vom 8 bis 15 Jahrhundert', *Archiv für Urkundenforschung* 14 (1935–6), 107–57 seems to stand: it was a somewhat special case because of its problematic relationship with Boniface's archiepiscopal see at Mainz. Other such bulls for German houses include *P. Uk.* 115 (Gandersheim), 124 (Essen), 157 (Bibra), 186 (Hersfeld), 187 (Meißen), 251 (Ellwangen), 264 (Korvey), 265 (Memleben), pp. 201–2, 218–20, 291–3, 364–6, 367–70, 494–5, 519–20, 521–2 – the first and last of these referring to Fulda's example. The one possible case in the West Frankish orbit is *P. Uk.* 263, pp. 517–19, but it is probably forged: C. Brunel, 'Les actes faux de l'abbaye de Saint-Valéry-sur-Somme', *Le Moyen Age* 22 (1909), 94–116, 179–96. In Italy, the one house with a history like Fulda's is (significantly?) Monte Cassino itself: *J* 2675A, 3381; *P. Uk.* 9, 18, 151, 244, 287, 302, 310, pp. 18–20, 31–2, 275–7, 482–4, 557–9, 586–8, 601–3. See also Santifaller, 251–74, on *Liber Diurnus* 32, 77, 86 (as n. 34), pp. 93–4, 138–40, 164–7.

46 *P. Uk.* 351, 530, 558, pp. 682–6, 1007–10, 1052–4. Cluny remained on excellent terms with bishops as a class: H. Diener, 'Das Verhältnis Clunys zu den Bischöffen', *Neue Forschungen*, pp. 251–352; but the Mâcon diocesan was another matter.

47 Indispensable for Gerard of Brogne is the set of millenary essays in *Revue Bénédictine* 70 (1960), 5–240: one can hardly approach the sources without their aid. For the re-editing of the sources see J. de Smet, 'Recherches critiques sur la *Vita Gerardi*', ibid., 5–61; in what follows, I have also used the papers of J. Wollasch, 'Gerard von Brogne und seine Klostergründung'; A. D'Haenens, 'Gérard de Brogne à l'abbaye de Saint-Ghislain'; J. Laporte, 'Gérard de Brogne à Saint-Wandrille . . .'; and D. Misonne, 'Gérard de Brogne à Saint-Rémy . . .', ibid., 62–82, 101–18, 142–66, 167–76.

48 *Ex virtutibus S. Eugenii*, ed. L. de Heinemann, MGH, Scriptores XV(2) 2–11, pp. 647–50.

49 *Ex Raineri Miraculis S. Gisleni*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH, Scriptores XV(2) 10, pp. 583–4, and cf. ibid., pp. 576–9.

50 Folcuin, *Gesta Abbatum S. Bertini*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH, Scriptores XIII ch. 107, p. 628 – and loc. cit. for the following quotation in the text. For Dunstan at Ghent, *Vita S. Dunstani auctore Adelardo, Memorials of St Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury* ed. W Stubbs (Rolls Series, London, 1874), pp. 59–60. For Arnulf's charter see *Diplomata Belgica ante annum millesimum centesimum scripta*, ed. M. Gysseling and A. C. F. Koch (Brussels, 1950), 53, pp. 143–6; discussed by E. Sabbe, 'Etude critique sur le diplôme d'Arnoul 1er comte de Flandre pour l'abbaye de Saint-Pierre à Gand', *Etudes d'histoire dédiées à la mémoire de Henri Pirenne par ses anciens élèves* (Brussels, 1937), pp. 299–330.

51 Cf. D. Misonne, 'Gérard de Brogne et sa dévotion aux reliques', *Sacris Brudiri* 25 (1982), 1–26.

52 *Vita Iohannis abbatis Gorziensis [VI]*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH, Scriptores IV Pr. (ch. 1–6), pp. 337–8. There was no commemorative collection in 1976 comparable to that for Gerard (above, n. 47), though there is a characteristic meditation by Dom Leclercq in the commemorative volume for Chrodegang of Metz, *Saint Chrodegang: colloque tenu à Metz à l'occasion du douzième centenaire de sa mort* (Metz, 1967), pp. 133–52, and

though Gerard's volume has an incisive study by J. Choux, 'Décadence et Réforme monastique dans la province de Trèves', pp. 204–23. But a conference on Lotharingian reform is apparently in preparation. [See Additional Note 7, p. 204].

53 K. Hallinger, *Gorze-Kluny: Studien zu den monastischen Lebensformen und Gegensätzen im Hochmittelalter*, Studia Anselmiana 22–5 (Rome, 1950–1): one of the charms of this 1059-page book is its author's repeated protestations that he is cutting material in order to keep it short. T. Schieffer, 'Cluniazensische oder Gorzische Reform-bewegung?', *Archiv für mittelrheinische Kirchengeschichte* 4 (1952), 32. The critique of Hallinger has focused on the 'Kluny' end of the antithesis: it is the main target of *Neue Forschungen* (as n. 31).

54 *VI* ch. 9–14, 16–24, 31–2, 45, 51–2, 55–71, pp. 339–46, 350–7. For an eremitical spell in the life of Odo see *VO* i 22, col. 53; and for some important distinctions between early and later monastic movements in regard to the hermit's life see H. Leyser, *Hermits and the New Monasticism: A Study of Religious Communities in Western Europe, 1000–1150* (London, 1984), pp. 12–17.

55 *VI* ch. 24–5, 29, 34–44, pp. 343–50.

56 Wulfstan, *Vita* ch. 10–13, pp. 39–42, and cf. A. Thacker, 'Æthelwold and Abingdon', in *Bishop Æthelwold: His Career and Influence*, ed. B. Yorke (1988), pp. 65–88, at pp. 45–52; *Cartulaire de l'Abbaye de Gorze*, ed. A. d'Herbomez (Mettensia II: Mémoires et Documents publiées par la société nationale des Antiquaires de France, 1898), 91, pp. 167–8; Adalbero's refoundation charter is no. 92, pp. 169–73.

57 *VI* ch. 115–36, pp. 369–77 (esp. ch. 117, p. 370).

58 *VI* ch. 83–4, 72–3, 85–90, pp. 360–1, 357, 361–2.

59 *VI* ch. 95–114, pp. 364–9; *Miracula Sancti Gorgonii*, ed. Pertz, ibid., 8–12, 15, pp. 241–3. W. Schultze, 'War Johannes von Gorze historischer Schriftsteller? Eine quellenkritische Untersuchung', *Neues Archiv* 9 (1883), 498–504 argued against John's authorship of these *Miracula* on the basis of the sort of over-elaborate *kritik* of hypothetical *Quellen* then much in fashion; Pertz's suggestion (loc. cit., p. 235) that the similarities between the two stories arise from the fact that John of St Arnulf's was using the '*Miracula*', and the discrepancies from the fact that he was supplying the role which John himself had modestly disclaimed in his own work, seems to be much neater and more plausible.

60 *VI* ch. 66–8, pp. 355–6, and cf. Gorze's own link with Rome ch. 52–3, pp. 351–2. For Ghent, see Hallinger, *Gorze-Kluny*, p. 79; and for a less ambitious approach to the Gorze filiation, M. Parisse, *La Nécrologe de Gorze: contribution à l'histoire monastique* (Annales de L'Est, publiées par la Université de Nancy, II 40, 1971).

61 *VI* ch. 70, 95, pp. 356–7, 364; Hallinger, *Gorze-Kluny*, pp. 47, 59–60, 95–128, etc. But see E. Wisplinghoff, *Untersuchungen zur frühen Geschichte der Abtei S. Maximin bei Trier von den Anfängen bis etwa 1150*, Quellen und Abhandlungen zur mittelrheinischen Kirchengeschichte 12 (Mainz, 1970), pp. 29–30. Important research by Mr Nightingale shows that 'reform' at St Maximin's was an essentially continuous process.

62 On Adalbert, I have followed D. Claude, *Geschichte des Erzbistums Magdeburg bis in das 12 Jahrhundert*, 2 vols, Mitteldeutsche Forschungen 67 (Cologne, 1972–5), I, pp. 114–28. See also nn. 63–6 below.

63 The evidence for Adalbert's Lotharingian origin is essentially that the Adalbert who was an enemy of St Maximin's (and whose identity with Gorze's lay abbot is possible rather than likely) is described in Sigehard's *Miracula S. Maximini*, ed. G. Waitz, MGH,

Scriptores IV ch. 16, pp. 233–4 as 'huius nostri Adalberti genitor'. G. Althoff, *Das Necrolog von Borghorst: Edition und Untersuchung*, Veröffentlichungen des historischen Kommission für Westfalen 40: Westfälische Gedenkbücher und Nekrologen I (Münster, 1978), pp. 268–82 shows that Adalbert was probably the brother of Bertha, foundress of Borghorst, and goes on to argue that its necrology's bias towards the kin of the Billung (her husband's family) and the 'Nachfahren Widukinds' (Queen Mathilda's family) excludes a Lotharingian origin for the family of Adalbert and Bertha. Can *argumenta ex silentio* be thus deployed on *Libri Memoriales* – especially if Adalbert *senior* was as described in the St Maximin's *Miracula*? 'Adalbertus noster' in a St Maximin's source still seems much more likely to be the future archbishop of Magdeburg than anyone else.

64 *Thietmari Merseburgensis Chronicon*, ed. R. Holtzmann, MGH, SRG NS iii 11, pp. 108–11.

65 (*Adalberti*) *Continuatio Reginonensis*, ed. F. Kurze, MGH, SRG, pp. 154–79; K. Hauck, 'Erzbischoff Adalbert als Geschichtsschreiber', *Festschrift für Walter Schlesinger*, ed. H. Beumann, 2 vols, Mitteldeutsche Forschungen 74 (Cologne, 1974), pp. 276–353. Althoff, *Borghorst*, pp. 275–6 shows that a lost version of Adalbert's history probably included a quite detailed account of the 816 legislation.

66 On Adalbert in the royal service see J. Fleckenstein, *Die Hofkapelle der deutschen Könige, II: Die Hofkapelle im Rahmen der ottonisch-salischen Reichskirche*, Schriften der MGH 16 (ii) (Stuttgart, 1966), pp. 37–8; and Wisplinghoff, *S. Maximin*, pp. 126–41. Adalbert's charters for St Maximin's are *Diplomata Regum et Imperatorum Germaniae [DO]*, ed. Th. Sickel, MGH I 169, 179, pp. 250–1, 260–2. The forgeries which inspired the first of these, together with *P. Uk.* 121, pp. 212–14 (and which seem to have influenced Adalbert's own diktat) are *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der . . . mittelrheinischen Territorien* I, ed. H. Beyer (Coblenz, 1860), 3, 9, 20, 46–7, 54, 109, pp. 1–2, 12–13, 25, 52–3, 60–1, 114.

67 Wisplinghoff, *S. Maximin*, pp. 5–6, 17–18.

68 *VO* iii 11, col. 82. K. Leyser, 'Die Ottonen und Wessex', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 17 (1983), 73–97 shows what can be done. Art historians have also done much: e.g. R. Deshman, '*Christus rex et magi reges*: kingship and Christology in Ottonian and Anglo-Saxon Art', ibid. 10 (1976), 367–405.

69 Symons' work came in three stages: 'The sources of the *Regularis Concordia*', *Downside Review* 59 (1941), 14–36, 143–70, 264–89; the introduction to his edition of *Regularis Concordia*, pp. xlv–lii; and 'The *Regularis Concordia*: history and derivation', *Tenth-Century Studies*, ed. Parsons, pp. 37–59: on the whole, each is successively less optimistic about the possibility of establishing continental links.

70 F. M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1971), pp. 449–50; the phrase 'Dunstan the mind, Ethelwold the pen' was coined by Edmund Bishop, and has been much quoted. Dunstan's 'mind' remains elusive, and I hope to return to it in a different context elsewhere.

71 The relevant customaries have been re-edited (with the *Regularis Concordia*) in *CCM* VII (2, 3), ed. K. Hallinger, who also edited the volume of introductory essays, VII(1) (1983–4). The new Fleury customs are ed. VII(2), pp. 3–60, and discussed VII(1), pp. 351–70; the quotation in the text is from a summary of Symons' position VII(1), p. 393, which is, happily for its author, anonymous. For the Fleury echo see Symons, *Tenth-Century Studies*, ed. Parsons, pp. 51–2.

72 The MSS are Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale MS U 107 (N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford, 1957) 376) (the unique 816 text); Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 57 (Ker 34); Cambridge University Library MS LI I 14; London, British Library Harley MS 5431; London, British Library Cotton MS Titus A iv (Ker 200); London, British Library Cotton MS Tiberius A iii (Ker 186) (with Aachen capitula and *Regularis Concordia* combined); they are listed by J. Semmler, CCM I, pp. 434, 506–7, and four were described by M. Bateson, 'Rules for monks and secular canons under Edgar', *English Historical Review* 9 (1894), 690–708 (quotation below at 701). A thorough re-examination is long overdue.

73 Corpus 57, f. 40v; CUL L1 I 14, f. 108r; in Tiberius A iii the relevant chapter has been erased. For the place of the English MSS in the stemmata of the Aachen decrees and the Memoriale Qualiter see *CCM* I, pp. 179–83, 202–18.

74 For Corpus 57 and Abingdon see Thacker, in *Bishop Æthelwold: His Career and Influence*, ed. B. Yorke (Woodbridge, 1988), pp. 54–5, 58–9. Winchester is suggested as the provenance of Rouen U 107 and Titus A iv by Semmler, loc. cit.; St Augustine's Canterbury is postulated as the home of Harley 5431 (apparently a continental manuscript), but Ker seems to be right in thinking it the source of Titus A iv (which, however, is allocated to Winchester by Semmler on no ascertainable grounds).

75 Symons, '*Sources*', p. 164; and for lack of influence from the Aachen *capitula*, *Tenth-Century Studies*, ed. Parsons, pp. 46–7. The *Memoriale* bears the title 'Eptoma Lothuuici Imperatoris super regulam Beati Benedicti' on Corpus 57, f. 34v; but it is not, *pace* Bateson, op. cit., to be ascribed to him or his reign: *CCM* I, pp. 177–282 at pp. 224–5 (and cf. ibid., pp. 7, 200).

76 Above, p. 175 and n. 28; cf. VI ch. 81, pp. 359–60.

77 *Regularis Concordia Anglicae nationis monachorum sanctimonialiumque*, ed. T. Symons (London, 1953) ch. 4, pp. 2–3; compare the legislative tone of ch. 69, p. 69. Symons suggested, *Tenth-Century Studies*, ed. Parsons, p. 47 that the reported communication between king and council at Winchester was modelled on that of Louis and the Council of Aachen – albeit the first was by letter and second oral.

78 For Edgar's 'imperial' coronation see J. L. Nelson, 'Inauguration Rituals', *Early Medieval Kingship*, ed. P. H. Sawyer and I. N. Wood (Leeds, 1977), pp. 63–70; and her 'The Second English Ordo', *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London, 1986), pp. 361–74. For Einhard on Aachen see *Vita Karoli*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH, SRG, ch. 22, p. 27. Symons was prepared to contemplate the date of 973 for *Regularis Concordia* also, *Tenth-Century Studies*, ed. parons, pp. 40–2, and we may note that Louis' 'Imperial Ordinance' (Cap. 136, pp. 270–3) was issued in the same month as one of the monastic capitularies (July 817): imperial and monastic ideology were cross-hatched on both sides of the Channel.

79 Note that an English library (Christ Church ?) had a MS of Odo's *Occupatio*: H. Gneuss, 'A preliminary list of manuscripts written or owned in England up to 1100', *ASE* 9 (1981), no. 903, p. 57; described by J. Leclercq, 'L'idéal monastique' (as n. 25), pp. 227–31, and designed to 'fix the wandering mind of monks', it is ed. A. Swoboda, *Odonis abbatis Cluniacensis Occupatio*, Collectio Teubner (Leipzig, 1900).

80 *Regularis Concordia*, ed. Symons, ch. 16–20, 24–5, 27, pp. 12–16, 20–2, 24–5. See the shrewd assessment of F. Barlow, *The English Church 1000–1066* (2nd edn, London, 1979), pp. 319–20; and for the political dimension, E. John, 'King and the monks' (as n. 23).

81 MGH Formulae (as n. 13) i 1–2, pp. 40, 43, etc. J. Semmler, 'Traditio und Königsschutz', *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, kanonistische Abteilung* 76 (1959), 1–33.

82 For Ralph's charters see above, n. 32; for those of Louis IV, *Recueil des Actes de Louis IV, 936–54*, ed. P. Lauer, Chartes et Diplômes (as n. 32) III (1914), 10, pp. 30–2, and cf. 20, pp. 49–51 (for Bourg-Dieu); for Lothair's, *Recueil des Actes de Lothaire et Louis V, 954–87*, ed. L. Halphen and F. Lot, Chartes et Diplômes II (1908), 7, 8, 12, pp. 15–18, 25–7. For Robert II's attempted protection see *Rec. Cl.* 2800, IV, pp. 2–4; and cf. 2485, 2711, III, pp. 566–8, 733–5. A categorical (perhaps too categorical) account of Capetian incapacity is Lemarignier (as n. 42), pp. 102–11.

83 *VO* iii 8, cols 80–1; *P. Uk.* 83, pp. 140–2.

84 *Collectio Canonum* 3–4, cols 477–9. Cf. J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'The *Via Regia* of the Carolingian Age', *Trends in Medieval Political Thought*, ed. B. Smalley (Oxford, 1965), pp. 38–9; P. Wormald, 'Æthelred the Lawmaker', *Ethelred the Unready: papers from the millenary conference*, ed. D. Hill, British Archaeological Reports 59 (Oxford, 1978), pp. 75–6. Fleury historiography was emphatically 'royalist': Helgaud de Fleury, *Vie de Robert le Pieux*, ed. R. H. Bautier and G. Labory (Paris, 1965).

85 *Recueil . . . Louis IV* 15, 36, 52, pp. 38–40, 82–6, 106.

86 *P. Uk.* 86, pp. 147–9; but Otto's extant diploma for Gorze postdates its papal charter: *DO* 70, pp. 149–51.

87 *P. Uk.* 211–12, 282, pp. 414–18, 550–1; cf. *Councils and Synods with other documents relating to the English Church, I, 871–1204,* ed. D. Whitelock, M. Brett and C.N.L. Brooke, Part I, 871–1066 (Oxford, 1981) 29, 36, pp. 109–13, 173–4; and for the Cluny parallels *P. Uk.* 58, 189, 530, pp. 96–7, 372–3, 1007–10. Zimmermann's suspicion of the Glastonbury privilege (*P. Uk.* 211) may be well-founded (though see next note); but the same can hardly be said of the letter to Ælfric (if there are scant *Liber Diurnus* echoes in it, the same goes for Cluny's no. 530); let alone of *P. Uk.* 307, the famous treaty between King Æthelred and Duke Richard of Normandy. H. Vollrath, *Die Synoden England bis 1066* (Paderborn, 1985), pp. 449–53, has doubts about the Winchester bull, chiefly because the monks failed to cite it when under attack in 1071; however, Levison, *Continent*, pp. 195–9, showed that the text was at this point furthering the production of Canterbury's notorious forgeries which is not only proof that it was extant by that time but also a very good reason why it was unavailable at Winchester! Since the only sound text of the privilege, which was addressed to Edgar rather than Æthelwold, was preserved by Archbishop Parker, it seems possible that it never got beyond Canterbury until it was 'copied' into Winchester cartularies, much later on. However, Dr Vollrath does give reasons for ascribing the bull to John XIII and to the year 967: loc. cit., and pp. 260–8.

88 Compare the terms of reference to royal initiative in *P. Uk.* 83 (Fleury), 121 (St Maximin's), 124 (Essen), 178 (Quedlingburg), 199 (Fulda), 229 (Ghent) and 211–12 (Glastonbury and Winchester), pp. 140–2, 212–14, 218–20, 349–51, 394–5, 450–1, 414–18; there is nothing unusual about Edgar's role. See also Semmler (as n. 81), 16–18.

89 But there may have been more than are now extant: we know of Ramsey's privileges only because they are mentioned in the abbey *Chronicon Abbatiæ Rameseiensis*, ed. W. Macray, Rolls Series (London, 1886), pp. 99, 171, 176; and Ramsey is one of only

two Anglo-Saxon abbeys with such a detailed history of its own. A full study of pre-Conquest *Papsturkunden* in England is an urgent desideratum.

90   *VO* iii 2, 8, cols 76, 80; cf. *Virtutes S. Eugenii* (as n. 48), 2, p. 647, and above, n. 67; also the Council of Trosly, J. Mansi, *Sacorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* XVIII ch. 3, cols 270–2.

91   F. J. Felten, *Äbte und Laienäbte im Frankenreich: Studien zum Verhältnis von Staat und Kirche im früheren Mittelalter*, Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters, ed. F. Prinz and K. Bosl, 20 (Stuttgart, 1980) puts the important case that lay abbots only became unacceptable (and so noticed) in the changed ideological climate of Carolingian times. He hardly does justice to the English evidence which I marshalled in 'Bede, *Beowulf* and the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy', *Bede and Anglo-Saxon England: Papers in Honour of the 1300th Anniversary of the Birth of Bede*, ed. R. T. Farrell, British Archaeological Reports 46 (Oxford, 1978), pp. 50–5; and in *Bede and the Conversion of England: The Charter Evidence* (Jarrow Lecture, 1984), pp. 19–23; (see also pp. 50–5, 153–8 in this volume).

92   *VG* i 32, 35, cols 660–1, 663–4; *VA* 16, 20, cols 406, 410.

93   *VI* ch. 35–42, 95–103, 110–14, pp. 346–9, 364–7, 368–9; *Miracula S. Gorgonii*, 8–11, 15, pp. 241–3. These matters are discussed by M. Parisse, 'Varangéville, prieuré de Gorze', *Saint Chrodegang* (as n. 52), pp. 153–67; I have also learnt much about Gorze's ninth-century history from S. R. Airlie, 'The political behaviour of the secular magnates in Francia, 829–79', Oxford D.Phil. thesis (1985), pp. 194–205.

94   *VI* ch. 104–9, pp. 367–8; *Miracula S. Gorgonii* 12, p. 242; for King Ralph and Cluny see Wollasch, *Neue Forschungen*, pp. 142–7.

95   *VI* ch. 95, p. 364; *Adalberti Chronicon* (as n. 65), pp. 159, 160–1; Sigehard, *Miracula S. Maximini* (as n. 63) 12, p. 232; *Miracula S. Gisleni* (as n. 49) 10, pp. 583–4. See Wisplinghoff, *S. Maximin*, p. 31; D'Haenens (as n. 47), 116–17.

96   *Liber Eliensis* ed. E. O. Blake, camden Society, 3rd series, 92 (London, 1962) ii 7, 11, 27, 30, 35, 49, 55, pp. 80, 90, 101, 104, 110, 116, 126–7; as against *Chronicon Abbatiæ Rameseiensis* (as n. 89) 22, 25, 28, 40, 41, 49, 58–60, pp. 29–39, 49–50, 52–5, 68, 72, 78–80, 90–107; and *Vita Oswaldi*, *The Historians of the church of York and its Archbishops*, ed. J. Raine, 3 vols (Rolls series, London 1877–94) I, pp. 443–6. D. J. V. Fisher, 'The anti-monastic reaction in the reign of Edward the Martyr', *Cambridge Historical Journal* 10 (1952), pp. 266–70 saw this very clearly; see also A. Williams, '*Princeps Merciorum gentis*: the family, career and connections of Ælfhere, ealdorman of Mercia', *ASE* 10 (1982), 166–72; and Keynes, *Diplomas of Æthelred*, pp. 163–76.

97   *Rec. Cl.*, p. xxix, n. 1, pp. 113–278, 278–529. Something of the same impression is made by the cartularies of Aniane, *Cartulaire des abbayes d'Aniane et Gellone*, ed. A. Cassan and E. Meynial (Montpellier, 1900), II, pp. 133–450; of Fleury, *Recueil des chartes de l'Abbaye de Saint-Benôit-sur-Loire*, ed. M. Prou and A. Vidier, Documents publiés par la société historique et archéologique du Gâtinnais (Paris, 1900), I, pp. 119–92; and of Gorze, ed. d'Herbomez (as n. 56), pp. 173–222.

98   *Liber Eliensis*, ed. Blake ii 11, 13, 15, 29, 31, 34, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63–4, 66, 67, 68, 69–70, 74, 81, 83, 88, 89, pp. 86–7, 91, 92, 103, 105, 108, 130–1, 131–2, 132–3, 133–6, 136–7, 138, 139, 139–40, 140, 143–4, 150, 151, 157–8, 158; *Chronicon Abbatiæ Rameseiensis* (as n. 89) 25, 28, 31, 32, 34–8, 50–1, 53–4, 63, 80–1, 90, 106–7, pp. 51, 52–5, 57, 58, 62–7, 81–2, 83–5, 111–12, 145–7, 153–4, 173–4.

99   The quotation is from Southern, *Making of the Middle Ages* (as n. 36), p. 83; the reference is to the Jerusalem pilgrimage particularly, and one of Abbo's Fleury pupils was son (one of a 'copiosa filiorum caterva') to Hugh, an Aquitainian aristocrat who was among the first Frenchmen to make the journey: *VA* 10, cols 397–8. For the atmosphere of Cluny in this later period see J. Wollasch, 'Parenté noble et monachisme réformateur: Observations sur les "conversions" à la vie monastique aux XIe et XIIe siècles', *Revue Historique* 264 (1980), 3–24.

100   Most recently, P. H. Sawyer, 'The charters of the Reform movement: the Worcester archive', *Tenth-Century Studies*, ed. Parsons, pp. 87–93; and N. P. Brooks, *The Early History of the Church at Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984), pp. 245–53. Note the parallel to the case made out for St Maximin's by Wisplinghoff (above, n. 61).

101   *CCM* I 23: 36, p. 526 (cf. 21: 5, p. 474); Abbo, *Liber Apologeticus, PL* XCCCIX, col. 464 (but *cave* the misprint!).

102   On this see Claude (as n. 62) II, pp. 200–7; *Gesta Archiepiscoporum Magdeburgensium*, ed. W. Schum, MGH, Scriptores XIV ch. 8, pp. 380–1; and Thietmar, *Chronicon* iv 65–8, pp. 205–9.

103   Above, pp. 171, 173, 174, 176, 178, 180 and nn. 3, 21, 25, 40, 51, 58–9; Odo's loyalty to the admittedly special case of St Martin was such that, though mortally ill at Rome itself, he was granted a sufficient recovery to return to unreformed Tours, where he died, *Martino duce*, within the saint's octave: *VO* iii 12, cols 83–6.

104   Wulfstan, *Vita* ch.14, 26, 33, 35, 37, 38, pp. 42–3, 49, 52–3, 54–5, 55–6; Ælfric ch. 18, p. 25 expresses the position in characteristically lapidary style: 'quod Æthelwoldus verbis edocuit, hoc Suuithunus miraculis decoravit'. (It will have become obvious that I accept Dr Lapidge's case for the priority of Wulfstan's *vita* over Ælfric's.) Mr Nightingale's thesis has a full discussion of the reconciliatory role of patron saints in Lotharingian reform.

105   It is a point of some interest that the earliest calendars to celebrate the feast of Bede as well as St Augustine of Canterbury on 26 May have a Winchester provenance (apart from one simply ascribed to 'Wessex'): F. Wormald, *English Kalendars before AD 1100*, Henry Bradshaw Society lxxii (1934), pp. 34, 118, 132, 160. For Æthelwold and the Saints of England see D. W. Rollason, 'The shrines of saints in later Anglo-Saxon England: distribution and significance', *The Anglo-Saxon Church: Papers on History, Architecture and Archaeology in Honour of Dr H. M. Taylor*, ed. R. Morris, Council for British Archaeology Research Report 60 (London, 1986), pp. 32–43; also Thacker, in *Bishop Æthelwold*, ed. Yorke, pp. 61–3.

106   These charter series are as follows (beginning with the latest, then following chronological order from earliest to penultimate): Downton, S 891, S 229, S 275, S 540, S 821; Taunton, S 1242 (cf. S 806), S 254, S 373, S 443, S 521, S 825; Chilcomb, S 946, S 325, S 376, S 439, S 817 (and cf. H. P. R. Finberg, *The Early Charters of Wessex* (Leicester, 1964), no. 27); Alresford, S 814, 242, 284, 375; Abingdon, S 878, S 93, 166, 183, 567, 658, 673, and cf. S 786 (Pershore). The Winchester series is discussed by Finberg, op. cit., pp. 214–48, and the 'Orthodoxorum' collection by Keynes, *Diplomas of Æthelred*, pp. 98–101. See also Thacker, in *Bishop Æthelwold*, ed. Yorke, pp. 51–4. This is not to say that the historical claims were fraudulent, nor to deny that the compilers had access to genuine material: merely to assert that the documents we have that purport to date from before Æthelwold's time were never 'issued' (whatever

the process involved) by the kings to whom they are ascribed, while those allegedly dating from the mid-tenth century onwards sustain the case made here whether genuine or bogus. I hope to return to this matter on another occasion.

107   Viz. S 376, 443, 540, and cf. Pershore's S 786 (its first abbot, Foldbriht, was a disciple of Æthelwold's: Wulfstan, *Vita* ch. 11, p. 41).

108   S 779 and 782; D. Whitelock, 'The authorship of the account of King Edgar's establishment of monasteries', *Philological Essays: Studies in Old and Middle English Literature in Honour of Herbert Dean Meritt*, ed. J. L. Rosier (The Hague, 1970), pp. 132–3; J. Pope, 'Ælfric and the Old English version of the Ely privilege', *England before the Conquest: Studies in primary sources presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, ed. P. Clemoes and K. Hughes (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 85–113.

109   *EHD* I, no. 238; *Leechdoms, Wortcunning and Starcraft of Early England*, ed. O. Cockayne, Rolls Series (London, 1866), III, pp. 432–44, now re-edited *Councils and Synods* ed. Whitelock et al. no. 33, pp. 142–54, which is the edition used here. As Whitelock suggests, it was probably designed as a prologue to Æthelwold's translation of the Rule, which it follows in the MS (London, British Library Cotton MS Faustina A x). For Edgar's kingship see *Bishop Æthelwold*, ed. Yorke, pp. 146–7.

110   See the very pertinent discussion (from the point of view of this paper) by G. Oexle, *Forschungen zu monastischen und geistlichen Gemeinschaften im westfränkischen Bereich*, Münstersche Mittelalterschriften 31 (Munich, 1978), pp. 112–18 (St Denis), 120–33 (St Martin's) and 134–62 (Lyons). Some places definitely regarded as one-time monasteries nevertheless escaped re-monasticization, including Agaune: Dereine, 'Chanoines' (as n. 4), col. 367 (a reference I owe to my colleague, Marilyn Dunn).

111   *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969), i 27 iv 27, pp. 78–81, 434–5; *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert*, ed. B. Colgrave (Cambridge, reprint 1985), ch. 16, pp. 208–9; Ep. Ecgb., pp. 413–18.

112   *Councils and Synods*, p. 145; Symons, *Tenth-Century Studies*, ed. Parsons, pp. 44–5. In 'Tradition and Continuity in the Last Century of Anglo-Saxon Monasticism', *JEH* 40 (1989), 159–207, Antonia Gransden strengthens the case for the influence on Æthelwold of the Letter to Ecgberht.

113   R. Schieffer, *Die Entstehung der Domkapiteln in Deutschland*, Bonner historische Forschungen 43 (Bonn, 1976), pp. 171–92.

114   *VA* 4, cols 390–1.

115   *Councils and Synods*, ed. Whitelock et al. pp. 151–2. Note the English language versions of the Winchester charters, S 806, 817, together with that for S 779, discussed by Pope (above, n. 108); and cf. Wulfstan, *Vita* ch. 31, p. 51. See the seminal article by H. Gneuss, 'The origin of standard Old English and Æthelwold's school at Winchester', *ASE* 1 (1972), 63–83.

Additional Note

Like chapter 1, this its 'sequel' suffered from a somewhat overblown apparatus (despite the protestation in n. 2), and there is little to be said for inflating it much further; this Note thus confines itself largely to works likely to be of most interest to Anglophone readers.

1 Pride of place should go to the collections that were themselves millenary sequels to the volume where this paper first appeared: N. Ramsey, M. Sparks and T. Tatton-Brown (eds), *St Dunstan: His Life, Times and Cult* (Woodbridge, 1992); and N. Brooks and C. Cubitt (eds), *St Oswald of Worcester: Life and Influence* (Leicester, 1996); of special value are Professor Lapidge's papers on the relevant biographies (pp. 247–59 and 64–83 respectively), with those of Professors Brooks and Rollason and Dr Thacker in the former (pp. 1–23, 261–72, 221–45), and of Drs Nightingale (on Fleury) and Barrow (on Worcester's community) in the latter (pp. 23–45, 84–99). Another monument was the extraordinarily learned edition of the third *vita* in the triarchy, Wulfstan of Winchester, *Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom (OMT, Oxford, 1991), and throughout this paper I have substituted it for Professor Winterbottom's own earlier Toronto edition. V. Ortenberg, *The English Church and the Continent in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries* (Oxford, 1992) is a first attempt to meet the challenge of Donald Bullough's 'unwritten work' (above, p. 170).

2 Hardly less of a landmark has been Professor Dumville's collected studies on this theme: D. N. Dumville, *English Caroline Script and Monastic History: Studies in Benedictinism, A.D. 950–1030* (Woodbridge, 1993), which rightly reproves (p. 98, n. 78) my muddle in n. 74 above over BL MS Harley 5431 (I should have followed T. A. M. Bishop, his own master, 'An early example of Insular-Caroline', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 4 (1964–8), pp. 396–400, not (Hanslik and) Semmler. R. Jayatilaka, my own research student, made a comprehensive study of early English monastic books in 'The *Regula Sancti Benedicti* in Late Anglo-Saxon England: the manuscripts and their readers' (Oxford, D.Phil., 1996) – pp. 78–108, 230–40, for Harley 5431 and BL Cotton MS Titus A.iv, modifying Ker's suggestion (adopted above) that the latter is copied from the former, and questioning its Winchester provenance; noteworthy too, in that it bears on the sort of audience for which Æthelwold was writing, is her rereading, pp. 164–75, of the phrase printed as 'uncyrred woroldman' by Cockayne and Whitelock (n. 109, above) as 'swa gecyrred . . . ', i.e. the *already (in part) converted*, not the *un*converted layman, 'the adult postulant'.

3 Dr Jayatilaka also discusses, pp. 178–89, the 'feminine reading' of several of these books, disputing the well-established theory that Æthelwold's whole project was aimed at female religious. This has been a theme of several studies by Dr Mechthild Gretsch arising from her own doctoral research (*Die Regula Sancti Benedicti in England und ihre altenglischer Übersetzung* (Texte und Untersuchungen zur englischen Philologie 2, Munich, 1973), notably 'The Benedictine Rule in Old English: a Document of Bishop Æthelwold's Reform Politics', in M. Korhammer (ed.) with the assistance of Karl Reichl and Hans Sauer, *Words, Texts and Manuscripts: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Culture Presented to Helmut Gneuss on the Occasion of his Sixty-fifth Birthday* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 131–58. (For a bit more attention to Second Sex religious life than supplied in my paper, see this volume's Appendix.) Latterly, Dr Gretsch's *The Intellectual Foundations of the English Benedictine Reform* (Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 25, Cambridge, 1999) makes a powerful case for Æthelwold's authorship of the main late Old English Psalter gloss, thus illuminating the English court culture of the first half of the tenth century from which the Benedictine movement sprang.

4 Published since this paper came out, though not without influence on its discussion of Benedict of Aniane and his master, is the Proceedings of the Oxford 1986 conference on Louis the Pious: P. Godman and R. Collins (eds), *Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on*

the Reign of Louis the Pious (Oxford, 1990), e.g. Professor Semmler's own contribution, '*Renovatio Regni Francorum*: Die Herrschaft Ludwigs des Frommen im Frankenreich 814–829/30', pp. 125–46. Alcuin's outlook and its York background are illuminated by Donald Bullough, *Alcuin* (as chapter 3, 'Additional Note' 3, p. 133), pp. 165–76. Meanwhile, J. L. Nelson, 'The Voice of Charlemagne', in R. Gameson and H. Leyser (eds), *Belief and Culture in the Middle Ages: Studies Presented to Henry Mayr-Harting* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 76–88, reviews the capitulary apparently quoting the great king's own words, above.

5   Cluniac spirituality (especially in its later, hence more radical, phase) has been the subject of several studies by Professor Dominique Iogna-Prat, starting with his book, *Agni Immaculati. Recherches sur les sources hagiographiques relatives à Saint Maieul de Cluny (954–94)* (Paris, 1988); see also, e.g., 'Hagiographie, théologie et théocratie dans le Cluny de l'an mil', in *La Fonction des saints dans le monde occidental (IIIe–XIIIe siècle)* (Collection de l'Ecole Française de Rome 149, 1991), pp. 241–57; and 'La confection des cartularies et l'historiographie à Cluny (XIe–XIIe siècles)', *Les Cartulaires. Actes de la Table ronde organisée par l'Ecole nationale des Chartes* (Mémoires et Documents de l'Ecole des Chartes 39, 1993), pp. 27–44 – ??, each now reprinted with other works pertinent to this later Cluniac phase in his *Etudes Clunisiennes* (Paris, 2002).) (I have not been able to see the collection edited by him, Barbara Rosenwein and others, *Saint Maieul, Cluny et la Provence. Expansion d'une abbaye à l'aube du Moyen Age* (Alpes de Lumière 115, Haute Provence, 1994). The other major Cluniac development for these purposes has been Professor Barbara Rosenwein's own *To Be the Neighbour of Saint Peter: The Social Meaning of Cluny's Property, 909–1049* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1989); together with her remarkable study of Cluny's immunity, its inspiration and implications, *Negotiating Space: Power, Restraint and Privileges of Immunity in Early Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1999); while my interpretation here comes out broadly in line with hers, she introduces many requisite nuances into the understanding of this very complex topic. Her initial thoughts on Cluny's immunity were 'Cluny's Immunities in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries: Images and Narratives', in G. Constable, G. Melville and J. Oberste, *Die Cluniazenser in ihrem politischen-sozialen Umfeld* (Vita Regularis. Ordnungen und Deutungen religiosen Lebens im Mittelalter 7, Münster, 1998), pp. 133–63.

6   The glaring lack of full monographical studies of Abbo of Fleury has been met in part by M. Mostert, *The Political Theology of Abbo of Fleury: A Study of the Ideas of Society and Law of the Tenth-Century Monastic Reform Movement* (Hilversum, 1987); for the authenticity of Gregory V's bull for Fleury (above, n. 44), but the likely forgery by Abbo of a bull designed to procure it, see his 'Die Urkundenfälschungen Abbos von Fleury', in *Fälschungen im Mittelalter 4(2)* (MGH, Schriften 33 (iv), 1988), pp. 287–318. Among much that has since been written on Abbo as hagiographer, his *Vita* of St Edmund is usefully integrated with the rest of his output by Dr Kay Gazzard, 'Themes and imagery in the works of Abbo of Fleury and his contemporaries' (Oxford, D.Phil., 2000).

7   I know of no significant developments in study of 'Gerardien' reform, but Gorze and St Maximin are another matter. The collection anticipated in my n. 52 is M. Parisse and O. G. Oexle, *L'Abbaye de Gorze au Xe siècle* (Nancy, 1993). Here, P. C. Jakobsen, 'Die Vita des Johannes von Gorze und ihre literarisches Umfeld', pp. 25–50, is the fresh analysis of this remarkable text cried for above, establishing from its single MS that it was almost certainly unfinished (whence its failure to describe John as abbot), and that John probably was indeed the author of the *Miracula Sancti Gorgonii* (as felt rather than argued in my n. 59);

see also the editors' contributions, 'L'Abbaye de Gorze dans le contexte politique et religieux lorrain à l'époque de Jean de Vandrières (900–74)', pp. 51–90, and 'Individuen und Gruppen in der lothringischen Gesellschaft des 10. Jahrhunderts', pp. 105–39, with further prosopographical detail (strikingly episcopal in flavour) on the 'ferocious Count Adalbert', and notable demonstration of the individuality of the *vita* portrait, pp. 128–37. Dr John Nightingale's study of Gorze charters, ibid., pp. 91–104, has subsequently blossomed into a seminal monograph on Lotharingian reform, *Monasteries and Patrons in the Gorze Reform: Lotharingia c. 850–1000*, part I devoted to Gorze and part III to St Maximin's. Of central relevance to my discussion are: ch. 3, on Gorze's links with the Bosonid kin, esp. pp. 48–50 on the nature of their 'usurpation'; ch. 5 on 'The Pre-Reform Community', esp. pp. 67–70 on the conditions facing the reformers in 933/4; ch. 6 on the ambiguities of Bishop Adalbero's role; and perhaps especially pp. 87, 94–5, on John's social background and reforming personality; then, pp. 181–3, 198–200, 220–2, on Gislebert's putative role in furtherance of St Maximin's reform (to the effect that the 'debate', above, pp. 185, 200, n. 95, is 'best avoided'); and pp. 211–12, for the identity of 'Adalbertus noster', son of the homonymous *miles* who had given the abbey grief, with the future Archbishop of Magdeburg – though not of this *miles* with Gorze's 'enemy' (above, pp. 180–1, and n. 63). Dr Nightingale also reviews (pp. 170–1, pp. 226–7) St Maximin forgeries and Adalbert's role in their confection (above, pp. 180–1, and n. 66), in the light of their reassessment – and redating *c.* 1000 – by Theo Kölzer, *Studien zu den Urkundenfälschungen des Klosters St Maximin vor Trier (10–12 Jahrhundert)* (Vorträge und Forschungen, Sdbd 36, Konstanz, 1987), pp. 39–55; the upshot of which (cf. my nn. 66, 88) is that neither *Diplomata* 169, 179 nor *P. Uk.* 121 are acceptable as Adalbert's work, nor, by implication, the forgeries listed in my n. 66. However, Dr Nightingale further illustrates Adalbert's 'chancery' responsibilities (p. 224, n. 27), and has doubts I share about completely excluding Adalbertian activity on St Maximin's behalf (pp. 226–7 (and n. 33), 230–1); as he says (p. 171), we should ponder not just 'the validity of any single charter but … the cumulative effect of considering the charters as a whole'. Dr Nightingale (pp. 28, 84, n. 42) also thinks *P. Uk.* 86 (above, n. 86) 'suspect'; but this in one way makes it more helpful to my argument, in that manufacture of a papal forgery to elicit a royal diploma (authentic *Diplomata* 70) underlines the priority that this continental abbey, like the English, attached to royal endorsement.

8   Meanwhile, back with Æthelwold, major doubts have been raised about his community's questionable documentation by Dr Susan Kelly, *Charters of Abingdon Abbey*, 2 vols, Anglo-Saxon Charters VII, British Academy (Oxford, 2000) I, pp. lxxxiv–cxv. Dr Kelly makes a formidable case that all 'Orthodoxorum' charters bar S 788 (for Worcester) represent substantially authentic transactions, a main reason for their idiosyncrasies being that Æthelwold himself or a draftsman very close to him drew them up on the king's behalf; another scribe in this same category being 'Edgar A', pp. cxv–cxxxi. This comes close to Dr Chaplais's argument ('Origin', p. 60, also 'The Royal Anglo-Saxon "Chancery" revisited', in H. Mayr-Harting and R. I. Moore (eds), *Studies in Medieval History presented to R. H. C. Davis* (London, 1985), pp. 41–51, at pp. 49–50), and also to my suggestion about the relevance of the Adalbert parallel, above, pp. 180–1, and to the propositions originally put in my review of Professor Keynes's *Diplomas of King Æthelred* (see ch. 4, n. 18). A riposte

from Professor Keynes is anticipated. But it need not gravely affect my argument here, whichever of Dr Kelly's or Professor Keynes's positions one adopts; as Dr Kelly says, p. xciv, 'there is nothing surprising that a document associated with Æthelwold should reflect historical interests …'. But a point to add to n. 107 above on Æthelwold's connection through his disciple Foldbriht with Pershore's charter is that this refers to an otherwise unknown but undoubtedly historical Ealdorman Beorhnoth (Kelly, p. cviii and n. 109), and thus has its own 'historical' dimension. All the same, while we still await Dr Alex Rumble's edition of the Old Minster charters, it already seems rather unlikely that much can be done for the credit of the Winchester series.

9   Finally the blurring of the borderline between clerical and secular callings, which is a central theme of this paper, is further addressed by essays in P. Wormald (ed.), *The Lay Intellectual in the Carolingian era* (forthcoming, Cambridge, 2007): all those discussed therein were either nobles themselves or closely linked with them. In 'The Strange Affair of the Selsey Bishopric, 953–63', in Gameson and Leyser (eds), *Belief and Culture*, pp. 128–41, at pp. 139–40, I ponder whether Æthelwold's onslaught on Winchester's 'clerks' may not have a political dimension – though with some trepidation, given the likelihood that this policy will now be given a 'merely political' explanation by all interested parties: such is *not* my contention there, here, or anywhere else.

6

The Venerable Bede and
the 'Church of the English'

It is appropriate that Bede should have a place in a book on 'The English Religious Tradition'.[1] But I do not intend to argue here that Bede was a prototype of Anglican churchmanship. I shall begin by trying to show that the part he has undeniably played in the historical image of insular protest against Rome is ironic and by him entirely unintended. I will go on to argue that, in founding the history of the *Church of the English*, indeed of the English themselves, he did make a central (if again unintended) contribution to the eventual emergence of a *Church of England*. Those who created the Church of England were very far from unaware of the inspiration they could draw from Bede.

The Church of England was not the only one to seek its charter in the earlier history of its nation's Christianity. From the days of George Buchanan, supplying initial historical propaganda for the makers of the Scottish Kirk, until a startlingly recent date, there was warrant for an anti-Roman, anti-episcopal and, in the nineteenth century, anti-Establishment stance in the Columban or 'Celtic' Church. Here is the peroration of a respectably learned book reprinted in 1957: 'When the Columban Church itself passed away, [independence] was the legacy that the Church of Columba bequeathed to the Church which was to be built at the Reformation upon the ruins of the Church of Rome, and which has been completed in the Church of Scotland – the most independent national Church in Christendom.'[2] The idea that there *was* a 'Celtic Church' in something of a post-Reformation sense is still maddeningly ineradicable from the minds of students.

One of the misconceptions involved is that there was a 'Roman Church' to which the 'Celtic' was notionally opposed. The pre-'Gregorian' Latin Church exhibited a rich variety of liturgies, and even organizational principles, as well as of Easters. And the Irish variety, as we shall see, was marked as much by devotion to the Petrine cult as by peculiarities absorbed from its exceptionally resilient secular traditions.[3] But what I wish to highlight is the extent to which the whole fallacy was affected by what Bede wrote. I begin with a model of judicious and unemotional scholarship by

the greatest (for historians at least) of Keble's *alumni*. Sir Frank Stenton saw in the work of Aidan and his followers 'all the characteristics of a Celtic missionary enterprise':

> The original community of Lindisfarne lived in gaunt austerity...Aidan himself was an ascetic evangelist...influencing men of all ranks by his humility and devotion...He and his companions were monks, and the monastic note runs all through their work...In their general conception of the religious calling, and especially in their tendency towards asceticism, the monastic communities founded by Aidan differed widely from those of the Roman pattern. But his own moderation was remembered ...On many points of ecclesiastical order, the Irish Church...differed from the prevailing custom of the West...In organization, it was monastic rather than territorial...authority rested with the abbot of the chief monastery in each tribe... Above all, in its method of calculating Easter, the Irish Church was governed by principles which differed fundamentally from those accepted at Rome or in the English churches founded under Roman influence.

I quote this passage at length, because it encapsulates almost all the features that historians have thought characteristic of the 'Celtic Church'; and even if this careful scholar tends to speak of 'Irish' rather than 'Celtic', he went on to make St Cuthbert the representative of the 'Celtic strains in the English Church'.[4]

Relatively few of the features attributed to Celtic Christianity by Stenton would come through the searching (not to say excoriating) tests of Irish historical scholarship today. But for present purposes it is more instructive to consider the views on the Irish and the *Frankish* Church proposed by a continental scholar who was fully Stenton's peer. Wilhelm Levison did not find Easter a critical issue, and he was among the first to show that the Irish were prominent in the spread of the cult of St Peter on the Continent.[5] He was not much impressed by the idea of the Irish as missionaries: evangelical efforts receive some attention, but are not seen as a primary motive of Irish activities. Above all, there is no suggestion that early Irish Christians were *moderates*. Levison's word for St Columbanus, the Irish founder of Luxeuil and Bobbio, and the inspiration behind a 'new wave' of Frankish monasticism, is '*kampfesroh*'. Levison took the lineaments of his picture from the rich hagiographical literature of the Columbanian monastic circle in seventh-century Gaul and Italy, especially the superb biography of the saint by Jonas. Jonas says nothing about Easter, comparatively little above evangelization, and a great deal about his hero's spectacular confrontations with the Frankish Establishment. Not everyone could expect to march out of the royal court after announcing that a Merovingian of illegitimate birth was debarred from the throne, nor to be accompanied as he did so by a clap of thunder.[6]

It is possible that Saints Columba and Columbanus were men of different mettle. Jonas may simply be a less reliable witness than Stenton's main source, who is of course Bede. Yet, as James Campbell has observed, we can find more than a hint of a

Columbanian approach between the lines of Bede's account of the Lindisfarne Church, as well as in the masterly *Life of Columba* by Adomnan that is the insular counterpart to Jonas.[7] Aidan, like Columbanus, repudiated a handsome royal gift, even if he is not said to have remarked that 'the Most High is displeased with the offerings of the wicked'.[8] Cedd, Aidan's disciple, consigned a king to the vengeance of the incestuous kindred with whom he was consorting, in a gesture reminiscent of both Columba and Columbanus. (Plummer noted that 'the frequency with which Irish saints distribute curses . . . is indeed remarkable in persons with a reputation for holiness.')[9] Like Jonas, Adomnan says nothing about Easter; and if one suspects that recent embarrassments played a part in both silences, one can add that Columbanian devotion to St Peter has a close equivalent in Adomnan's use, among hagiographical models quoted to shed lustre on his hero, of the *Actus Sylvestri*, forerunner and, in part, source of the notorious papalist forgery, the 'Donation of Constantine'.[10] So it may be that it is Bede and historians in these islands who follow him that are the odd ones out.

We return, then, to the features extracted by Stenton from Bede. It is Bede whose description of the 'unusual' constitution of Iona and its *parochia* led almost all historians until recently to see abbatial rule rather than episcopacy as characteristic of the 'Celtic Church'. 'Unusual' would in fact have been the *mot juste* for Iona when compared to other early Irish Churches, and those of Wales too.[11] It is Bede, *not* Adomnan, who makes Columba 'convert the Picts to Christ by his words and example'. Even if there was an element of wishful Pictish thinking here, as my ex-colleague Professor Duncan forcibly argued, Bede's words are very characteristically his own.[12] That the Lindisfarne Church was responsible for a prolonged and fruitful English mission under royal auspices is not open to doubt. But we may begin to wonder whether such activity was as typical of the Irish Church as Bede certainly implies, when we turn to the use he made of an extant Merovingian *Life* of St Fursa. All the *Life* says of evangelization in East Anglia is that Fursa 'softened the king's barbarous heart'. But for Bede, he 'followed his usual task of preaching the Gospel, and converted many unbelievers by the example of his virtue and the encouragement of his preaching'.[13] Above all, it is surely Bede's four immortal portraits of the lifestyle of 'Celtic' churchmen, Aidan himself, the Lindisfarne community on the eve of its departure, Chad and Cuthbert, which underlie our impression of a 'gaunt austerity' that would not perhaps have been the first impression of a seventh-century visitor to Armagh; which sound the 'monastic note' so strongly; and which leave a lasting aftertaste of 'humility' and (most precious of virtues) 'moderation'.[14] In short, Bede has done more than anyone, more even than Adomnan and picturesque scenes of beehive huts, to make these 'Celtic' saints lovable.

Now, as Alan Thacker has convincingly shown, there is very little doubt about the palette on which Bede's unforgettable colours were mixed. At the very end of his life, he told Bishop Ecgberht that he should be reading Pope Gregory's *Book of Pastoral Rule*. In setting up the Lindisfarne community as a contrast to the 'sloth of our time',

it very much looks as though he had Gregorian virtues in mind.[15] He gives as his explicit reason for commending the monastic way of life on Lindisfarne that it corresponded to what Gregory enjoined on Augustine at Canterbury (as, on the whole, it did not).[16] Not just the necessity of preaching but the technique of conversion *by example* are absolutely central Gregorian themes, as was the humility that a bishop must cultivate – though never to excess – in his dire need to avoid the danger of pride. And if there was a primer of moderation in the vast range of patristic literature, it was the *Pastoral Rule*; though Gregory's and Bede's preferred term was 'discretion'. It may be that Aidan did, in a well-known Bedan *tableau*, rebuke a failed predecessor for 'unreasonable harshness', and recommend a 'little-by-little' approach. If so, he contrived to use remarkably Gregorian words when scarcely likely to have read the book.[17] Professor Campbell has taught us that Bede wrote history to preach the examples of the past to his contemporaries.[18] The lessons he sought to teach were those of orthodox churchmanship. It was in so far as they encapsulated these lessons, or seemed to, that he praised the Irish in Northumbria. So it is that, by not the least of historiography's ironies, prototypes of Protestantism have been found in a model whose main lines were drawn by a pope.

If that seems too much to believe, there is one aspect of 'Celtic Church' history for which Bede's responsibility is undeniable. The Scottish Divinity Faculty where, till not all that long ago, the Church History course ran from Acts to 664 before resuming in 1560, may have been an isolated case. But that the Synod of Whitby had a nigh-cosmic significance in the relations of the Church of Rome with those of the British Isles and beyond is a conviction that still seems unshakeable. Most scholars today accept that the decision related to Easter and the tonsure only, not to allegedly more fundamental underlying issues of organization and discipline. Many are aware that it concerned only the part of the English Church answerable to Lindisfarne. Most of these know that this was just one chapter in the long-running saga of paschal disputes within the Irish Churches, themselves merely one set of episodes among several that were more or less comparable in the Latin Churches at large.[19] None of these provisos seems sufficient to persuade scholars to give Whitby rather less prominence than Archbishop Theodore's Synod of Hertford in 672, which *did* discuss Easter, but which also covered a series of crucial disciplinary matters, and involved the whole English Church (of which it might well be seen as the founding charter). The reason is clear. Bede's unrivalled artistry made Whitby a central dramatic episode, perhaps *the* climactic episode, in his story; whereas, though in no doubt of Hertford's importance, he reported simply its decisions rather than the whole course of an impassioned debate.[20] A world grown used to confrontations with St Peter and their not infrequently tragic outcomes, will never forget that of Columba, nor how the power of the keys swung the decision against him.

But we should not forget that Bede's account of the Easter controversy has no counterpart in scale or drama throughout the literature of Christianity: not even in Eusebius, who was in so many respects Bede's model; not in Gregory of Tours,

otherwise his nearest equivalent; not in Eddius' *Life of Wilfrid*, a Whitby protagon-ist, where it takes up one not especially lengthy chapter; not in Adomnan or Jonas, if perhaps, as I say, for rather special reasons; not in the Irish Church as a whole, where Cummian's polemic devoted solely to this issue is not much longer than the account of the Synod of Whitby that is far from Bede's only discussion of the matter in a book concerned with the Church in general.[21] There are perhaps three reasons why Bede was so preoccupied with Easter as to leave the impression of a Church fighting for its 'independence'. First, Easter was Bede's obsession. He was after all the author of the all-time definitive treatment of the subject, and was not the last scholar to let his speciality dominate his perspective. Second, he wrote from a distinctly Canter-bury angle. To judge from one preface to the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, he owed Canter-bury's Abbot Albinus not only much of his information but also the very idea of writing the book.[22] The unity of the English Church was a matter of the most passionate concern to him, and it was in this one respect that the Irish example was bad. Third, this was only one aspect of Bede's commitment to unity in the whole Church. Paul Meyvaert has strikingly observed that Gregory the Great might well *not* have shared Bede's paschal obsession, certainly not his belief in a uniform tonsure: 'A Gregory the Great must never be confused with a Gregory VII, and on the issues at stake Bede's mind was probably closer to the latter than to the former.'[23] Bede in some ways anticipates that sense of the need for uniformity which is already a Carolingian principle two and a half centuries before Hildebrand. So another irony is that someone who said so much of disunity precisely because he so detested it should unwittingly have immortalized the image of a Church in defiance of Rome.

Bede cannot, then, be the apostle of a Church for whom it still remains axiomatic that the Truest Wisdom resides (to quote words that Bede ascribes to Wilfrid) 'in the two remotest islands of the Ocean'.[24] But that is far from all there is to say on the matter. To have agreed to speak for Bede in a series on 'The Genius of Anglicanism' would hardly do, had I not thought that he did indeed play an indispensable part in the ultimate emergence of a 'Church of England'. I shall now go on to argue that he, more than anyone else, inspired the idea of the English as one people, called into existence by the special favour of God.

This argument is best begun at the end. One can make a good case – in view of the improbabilities involved, an astonishingly good case – that words like 'England' and 'English' were used by 1066 in very much the way they are still used. The vernacular is already English as a matter of course. In the last and in many ways definitive pre-Conquest law-code, Cnut legislates as 'king of all *Engla lond*', accord-ing to '*Engla*' law'.[25] The terminology is not confined to formal texts. It is absolutely normal in any phase and all versions of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Some thought that it would be great folly to join battle because in the two armies were most of what was noblest in *Ængla landa*; 'it was hateful to almost all to fight against men of their own *cynnes*, because there was little else that was worth anything apart from

Englisce on either side.'[26] If the Chroniclers be suspected of having axes to grind, as they not infrequently had, there is also the homilist Ælfric on the Romano-British martyr St Alban: 'the murderous persecution of the wicked emperor came to *engla lande*' – an authentic early instance of the Englishman's tendency to confuse the identities of 'England' and 'Britain'.[27] And if the Winchester-educated Ælfric could also be thought *parti pris*, we have a fragment in an eleventh-century manuscript with Worcester connections of what may be the sole surviving private letter from one relatively 'ordinary' Anglo-Saxon to his 'brother Edward'. The letter's first complaint relates to his brother's hairstyle: 'You do wrong in abandoning the English practices which your fathers followed, and in loving the practices of heathen men, and in so doing show by such evil habits that you despise your race and ancestors, since in insult to them you dress in Danish style with bared necks and blinded eyes.'[28] The point here is not that an Englishman is imitating foreign fashions, for far from the last time. It is that he is being told that it is 'un-English' to do so.

Three points need to be made about this sense of England and the English. First, it was unparalleled in the Europe of the time. The '*regnum Francorum*' extended in both Merovingian and Carolingian eras over all of what is now France and much more besides. The Franks were taught to think of themselves as a holy '*gens*' ruling an '*imperium Christianum*'. But for a while yet, very far from all the king's subjects thought themselves Franks. To the civilized *gentes* south of the Loire, the term seemed suitable only for the 'barbarians' living to its north. There has been much debate in the last generation about whether a single reference to the '*regnum Teutonicorum*' is genuinely tenth-century or a later interpolation. The significant point is that so much hangs on one disputed text. The concept of '*Deutschland*' made notoriously little headway against other German allegiances for centuries to come.[29] Given the political realities, there was also a surprisingly strong sense of the 'Men of Ireland'. But the learned classes who did most to burnish this image were so committed by their *raison d'être* to traditional patterns, that they continued to write of Ireland's 'Fifths' (Ulster, Leinster, etc.), regardless of the fact that this immemorial structure had been rendered obsolescent in the immediately prehistoric period by the Uí Néill dynasts with the most realistic prospect of turning myth into political fact.[30]

Second, such a sense of 'Englishness' was not even new in the eleventh century. A Mercian royal charter of 855 grants freedom from 'lodging all riders of English race (*Angelcynnes*) and foreigners'. A Kentish nobleman's will of much the same date is to be valid 'so long as baptism exists in the *Angelcynnes* island'.[31] When King Alfred wrote, in a famous passage from his translation (into '*englisc*') of Gregory's *Pastoral Rule*, about the decline of Church, learning and happiness 'among all *Angelcynn*', he reflected a contemporary trend.[32] Third and last, however, there was very little basis for the growth of so strong an ethnic sense in Britain's post-Roman history. One of the signs that no sub-Roman aristocracy survived in Britain, as it did in Italy, Spain

or Gaul, to mould the political imagination of incoming Germanic war-bands, is that there is so little evidence of an idea that *Britannia* should be subject to unitary rule. Many of us grew up with Stenton's notion of a '*bretwalda*' (he was too good a Keble scholar to tolerate the neologism, '*Bretwalda*-ship').[33] Ten years ago, I expressed doubts that so thin an evidential base could possibly bear the historical weight resting on it. I am now thought conservative.[34] In that overlordship was contested by various kingdoms, like the not dissimilar 'Kingship of Tara' in Ireland, it gave rise to resentments that did nothing to foster feelings of 'togetherness'.

My argument in 1983 was, and is still, that the clue to this conundrum lies in the use of the word 'English'. Bede identifies the invaders as Saxon and Jute as well as Angle. The special virtue of Angles was not so much that they supplied nearly all the newcomers' most powerful rulers for two centuries after 616. This would hardly have commended the term to the West Saxon Alfred. It was chiefly that it was in their name that Christianity was restored to what had once been *Britannia*. So far as we know, the first person to assume that the Germanic-speaking inhabitants of Britain were all called Angles was Gregory the Great. Whatever the truth of the notorious story of his encounter with 'angelic' slave-boys, it is a fact that the copious correspondence with which he launched his mission to the pagans of Britain never calls them anything but 'Angles'. On the Latin-speaking Continent in the sixth century, and for some time afterwards, normal usage was 'Saxon'. Everyone in *Britannia* whose language was Germanic seemed, whatever their real ancestry, to be descended from its pagan invaders. It followed that all were 'Angles', owing their Christian faith to Gregory's mission, and to the 'church of the Angles' that it had founded at Canterbury. The outcome is neatly illustrated by Ælfric's homily for Gregory's feast-day. The slave-boys are still said to be '*Angle*', but they come from '*engla lande*', and are being sold in Rome by '*englisce*' merchants.[35]

The nostrum that the English were unified ecclesiastically well before they were united politically thus acquires extra significance. The Church brought more than a new communal *persona*. It gave it a name. English identity was not, like Frankish or (Continental) Saxon, a badge of the most successful of the peoples contesting supremacy in a given sphere. It was what each Anglo-Saxon was called in Heaven. The idea of '*Angelcynn*' was conceived not, like that of 'the Men of Ireland', in the mists of legendary antiquity, but in the mind of God. Yet not even Canterbury possessed the ideological clout to impose a new ethnicity unaided. It was Bede who gave 'Englishness' a manifesto of unique grace and power. When contemplating the divergent destinies of early medieval hegemonies, nothing is so suggestive as the contrast between their programmatic historians. 'The History of the Franks' was not Gregory of Tours' own title, nor in fact is it what he wrote. He and his successors gave the Franks an image of their special status, but the imagery was wasted on those of the Carolingians' subjects who did not consider themselves Franks. Widukind of Korvey, trumpeting the rise of a German monarchy, called his book '*Res Gestae Saxonicae*'. It was indeed a specifically Saxon, not a German, history. Its heroes are

almost as much the Saxon nobility, even in rebellion, as Otto the Great himself. This was anything but a warrant for Saxon acceptance of non-Saxon rule.

The very first words of Bede's preface, on the other hand, are 'Historiam ecclesiasticam gentis Anglorum'. Professor Walter Goffart and others have recently wondered whether Bede's 'Angles' were not in fact his fellow Northumbrians, *technically* Angles, rather than 'Englishmen' in general, i.e. 'Anglo-Saxons'. Facing this challenge will regrettably take us into the dusty, if not entirely infertile, fields of semantic analysis.[36] In the *Ecclesiastical History*, the word 'Angle' occurs 179 times (discounting specifically 'East' and 'Middle' varieties). On no less than seventy-eight occasions, it must mean 'English', in the sense of 'Angles, Saxons, Jutes and the rest', those of ostensibly Germanic origin in contradistinction to Britons, Irish and Picts. Fifty-seven such cases denote the 'English' as a religious entity, but twenty-one more give the term an emphatically secular connotation. Cadwallon's determination to extirpate 'the whole *genus Anglorum* from the bounds of Britain' clearly does not refer merely to the Northumbrians. King Earconberht of Kent, '*primus rex Anglorum*' to order the destruction of idols and the observance of Lent, was neither Northumbrian nor technically Anglian; nor, when his daughters sought convents '*in regione Francorum*' because there were yet few '*in regione Anglorum*', was it a shortage of houses north of the Humber they had in mind. Especially instructive are the headings for the famous chapter on the arrival of Angles, Saxons and Jutes, '*ut invitata Britanniam gens Anglorum*'; and for the concluding survey of the current state of all Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and bishoprics, '*qui sit in praesenti status gentis Anglorum vel Britanniae totius*'.[37] We can add to such surely unambiguous instances, twenty-seven uses of the word to denote Germanic as opposed to Celtic or Latin speech. Seventeen places or items thus designated are Northumbrian or otherwise Anglian, but ten are not.[38] So on a minimalist reckoning (ten plus seventy-eight), Bede's 'Angles' were what we mean by 'Englishmen' nearly as often as they were not.

We are left with seventy-four further instances of the word. On just seven occasions (four in the 'arrivals' chapter), Bede means Angle as opposed to Saxon.[39] On another forty-four, he can reasonably be taken to mean 'Northumbrian', in that the individual or collective thus indicated was in fact Northumbrian. Yet there is scarcely one case where the more general meaning 'English' would not do as well. If we are to read 'Northumbrian' into the word as applied to achievements of Kings Æthelfrith, Edwin, Oswald, Oswiu or Aldfrith, we should note that it had previously been applied in very similar contexts to Æthelberht of Kent.[40] If it means 'Northumbrian' when used of actual Northumbrians like Benedict Biscop, it can hardly do so when used of the luckless Kentish cleric who died in Rome before he could be consecrated archbishop.[41] Those who subjected Whithorn to the '*gens Anglorum*', or whose power waned with the loss of lands north of the Forth, were indeed Northumbrian, but also 'English' in so far as their rivals in each sphere were Celts.[42] Besides these forty-four cases, where a wider meaning is at least possible, twenty-one are more truly ambiguous. The Anglo-Saxons who founded Mayo, six

times described as 'Angles', were probably mostly Northumbrian, but it is unlikely that Bede thought all of them were. The same goes for 'Anglian' visitors to Ireland at large (three references), or the four 'Anglian' kingdoms whose relations with Celtic neighbours are assessed in the summarizing chapter. And while it is impossible to say whether the '*alii in gente Anglorum*', whose poetry Bede thought inferior to Caedmon's, were Northumbrians specifically or Anglo-Saxons in general, the latter is as good a guess as the former.[43] In short, eighty-two cases (sixty-five plus the above seventeen 'Anglian' places or items), where it makes sense to read 'Northumbrian' but rarely makes nonsense to read 'English, contrast with eighty-eight where 'English' is really the only feasible meaning. Scholars preferring the narrow interpretation face a burden of proof such as to render Atlas enviable.

To turn from terminology to content, it is of course true that a high proportion of the *Ecclesiastical History* is about Northumbria. Given the geographical bias of Bede's information (Canterbury apart), and his understandable pride in the rulers and saints of his own kingdom, it would be surprising if it were not. The heavily northern orientation of Book V thus arises from Bede's predictable interest in the miracles of the bishop who ordained him, in the life of Wilfrid, predecessor and mentor of Acca, his current diocesan and dedicatee of most of his other books, and in what his own Abbot Ceolfrith wrote to the king of the Picts about Easter – not to forget his own rewrite of Adomnan's book on the Holy Places. Naturally too, he could describe a Northumbrian's vision of the afterlife in the man's own words, but knew less of a Mercian's comparable experience.[44] Yet Bede would hardly have sought out informants from other kingdoms had he not intended to tell the story of the English as a whole. His abiding interest in the wider picture emerges from his two final chapters: that on 'current affairs' referred to already, and a chronological summary with as many entries (including the last) about Anglo-Saxons overall as about Northumbrians.[45] It therefore seems safe to view the *Ecclesiastical History* as later generations of Anglo-Saxons from all parts of the island certainly did. It was indeed a spiritual history of a single '*gens*', albeit one divided into several '*gentes*'.[46] That Bede was himself an Angle affected its matter but not its message. His view of the 'Angles' was that of Canterbury and of Gregory beyond.

This is not to say that Bede's objective was English political unity. At the same time, his book had an underlying message that drew on decades of study of the history of Israel as deployed in the Bible. Bede had Gregory's exegesis to teach him that the 'literal' or 'moral' methods of interpreting Scripture were particularly suitable for the instruction of 'the little ones'.[47] In two biblical commentaries at least, he dwelt systematically on 'literal' or 'moral' meanings, and emerged with interpretations that have a startling relevance to what he would later write in the *Ecclesiastical History*. So, David's dance before the Ark as it came up to Jerusalem showed the need for humility in kings (like Oswald); the instant death of the priest who reached out to steady it as it wobbled on its cart signified the 'presumptuous Jewish people', who aimed to keep salvation for themselves (like the Britons).[48]

Bede's mind was already attuned to the moral lessons of one people's past. In turning to instruct his own 'little ones', the '*nostrae…Anglorum gentis inertiae*', through their own history, he naturally understood it in similar terms.[49] The *Ecclesiastical History* opens with a detailed account of Britain as a land of plenty. Next, its inhabitants, the Britons, are introduced by Rome to civilization, and eventually the Faith. But Rome withdraws, and the Britons fall into sin. They ignore the warnings of Gildas, 'their *historicus*'. They are scourged by invasion, but fail to learn its lessons. After defeating the invaders, they relapse into their old ways. They do not trouble to pass Christianity on to their new Germanic neighbours. As Bede knew and Gildas did not, the scourge comes again, and there is this time no recovery. God abandons the Britons. They lose their lovely land to those they have left in ignorance of Him. Yet 'God in his goodness did not reject the people whom he foreknew.' Rome comes again to Kent, in the period of Augustine, not Julius Caesar. The English are the heirs not only to the island but also to the religion that its original inhabitants have abused, and (as regards the date of Easter) are still abusing. Bede's story ends on a note of apparent euphoria. But it has a stern moral; one which we know was in Bede's mind, because the letter that he wrote three years later to his pupil, Bishop Ecgberht of York, was anything but euphoric. If the English sin as the Britons had, they face the same fate. The *Gens Anglorum* is a people with a Covenant, like Israel. Its future depends on keeping its side of a bargain with a God who is in every sense its maker.[50]

The attitude of their historians was in the first instance an effect, but ultimately also a cause, of the contrasting histories of England, France and Germany. For, whether intentionally or no, Bede's biblical model had immense political potential. Successful hegemonies in the early medieval West tended to exploit a common fear of a common enemy: an enemy who was preferably infidel, so threatening not only the interests but also the cherished assumptions of an otherwise fissiparous society. Power was established by effective leadership against a yet greater evil than a busily interventionist government. The Alfredian dynasty's campaigns against the Vikings were cast in the same ideological mould as the Carolingian claim to be rescuing the Christians of Gaul from advancing Islam, or the Lechfeld triumph of the Ottonians over the mortal danger that the Magyars posed to all Germans. But Alfred and his heirs had the additional advantage that their role made sense of the pattern of Anglo-Saxon history, as Bede had unforgettably laid it out.

A single people may not need a single ruler. But a people of the Covenant does. Israel, after all, was the archetype of the 'Kingdom divided against itself', and of its lamentable results. By directly tracing English destinies to God's plan, Bede lent the campaign for a united 'English' kingdom an urgency that *soi-disant* kings of Tara might well envy. Alfred's sketch in his *Pastoral Rule* preface of 'happy times', when 'kings were obedient to God and his messengers, and upheld peace and morals and authority at home, and also extended their territory abroad, and prospered both in warfare and in wisdom', was clearly drawn from Bede's picture of the seventh-

century 'Golden Age' of the English Church. In stressing 'what temporal punishments [i.e. Vikings] came upon us when we possessed only the name of Christians, and few possessed the virtues', he implicitly invoked the English Covenant.[51] His law book opens with another remarkable preface: a translation of nearly three chapters of Mosaic law from the Book of Exodus, followed up by the story of how the Church had modified and transmitted this law 'throughout the whole world, and also to the *Angelcynn*'. This had the effect of showing Anglo-Saxons how similar were their laws to those of Ancient Israel. It also invited them to remodel themselves as a new Chosen People. Such was the foundation of a vigorous law-and-order campaign, designed to make the English into deserving recipients of God's favour, and sharing (I would argue) many of the features and all the brutality of the criminal law whose introduction is conventionally ascribed to Henry II.[52]

> There was a historian in the times of the Britons, called Gildas, who wrote about their misdeeds, how with their sins they angered God so excessively that finally He allowed the army of the English to conquer their lands . . . Let us take . . . warning . . . we know worse deeds among the English than we have heard of . . . among the Britons . . . Let us love God and follow God's laws . . . Let us carefully keep oath and pledge, and have some loyalty between us without deceit.

This is Archbishop Wulfstan's great 'Sermon of the Wolf' from the grim year of 1014, when the English kingdom faced the first of its two eleventh-century conquests. Wulfstan is quoting a letter of Alcuin, written in shock at the Viking sack of the holy island of Lindisfarne in 793. Alcuin, who knew men who had known Bede, can be trusted to have grasped the message of the *Ecclesiastical History*. Wulfstan was himself the draftsman of many later Anglo-Saxon law-codes. His laws trouble the tidy minds of legal historians, because they are so very like his sermons. His confusion of these media in the urgent pursuit of his message epitomizes the linkage between Bede's vision of English history and the attempt to make society holy by law.[53]

The widespread dissemination of 'English' identity, and the nowadays generally acknowledged power of Old English government, each imply that the message was getting through. It is understandable that it should. Any early medieval *gens* could see its mirror image in the Old Testament. Some did. But English identification with Israel arose from direct experience. This was, for West Saxon, Kentishman, Mercian and Northumbrian alike, that Bede's warning had all but been realized in the ninth century. Their hard-won promised land had almost been lost, along with the Faith introduced by Rome itself, to another wave of pagan invaders from across the North Sea. The tenth century, by contrast, brought triumphs unprecedented since the sixth, under kings who made it their business to see that society 'possessed the virtues' as well as the 'name of Christians'. But one more lapse could mean final disaster: the English would suffer from the Vikings what the Britons once suffered

from them. Compliance with unification was not only symbolically proper; it was also a condition of survival. The high costs of allegiance to Alfred's house were paid, because the Anglo-Saxons had already been taught by their historian to accept the terms of their special relationship with the Almighty.

My argument, then, is that Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* had some of the role in defining English national identity and English national destiny that the narrative books of the Old Testament had for Israel itself, or Homer for the Greeks, or Vergil (rather than Livy) for the Romans. There is a natural tendency to wonder whether a work so suffused with an intellectual's piety could possibly have had such an impact. It should be resisted. Manuscripts of the *Ecclesiastical History* from pre-Conquest England number nine in Latin and six in Old English translation. If this does not seem a lot, it is more than those of any other non-biblical book, except Ælfric's *Homilies* (25), and Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* (18). It outstrips even the *Pastoral Rule* and the *Rule of St Benedict*.[54] And if the number of pre-1066 manuscripts is more impressive than it looks at first, it is far outstripped by the number from the century that followed. Bede's popularity in the twelfth century has been attributed recently to the appeal that his portraits of pristine Irish ascetics had for the new monastic orders. Yet only three copies are from Cistercian libraries, and more than half the twenty-six that are placeable come from the great Benedictine houses that were always the most closely associated with medieval ruling-class mentalities.[55] One of the most interesting is from Battle Abbey itself, the Abbey that Henry II's justiciar (the abbot's brother) saw as the charter of the new regime.[56] The main appeal of the *Ecclesiastical History* may therefore have been that it continued to make sense of English experience. When the Vikings did come again in 1066, with all the ruinous effects feared by the makers of *Angelcynn*, the model proved its versatility. Two half-Englishmen in the early twelfth century wrote histories which adapted it to the new conditions. The *Gesta Regum Anglorum* (kings from Hengest to Henry I) was written by William of Malmesbury in self-conscious succession to Bede. He was among the first to make the equation between the Norman Conquest and an unreformed English Church that haunts our text-books still. Orderic Vitalis personally penned a copy of Bede, as well as composing an *Ecclesiastical History* of his own that was modelled on Bede's in more respects than its title.[57] An account 'of deeds of Normans for Normans', it can also be seen as a *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Normannorum*, and is very much a story of conquerors operating as the instrument of God's punishment for sin. In short, the English were not forgotten by God, only scourged. By learning their lesson, they could flourish again.

So we come at last to the 'genius of Anglicanism'. God's Englishmen had a long future. It has been argued that Wycliffe's sense of an '*ecclesia Anglicana*' was based in part on knowledge of Bede's 'Golden Age', and indeed of his angry denunciation of growing abuses in his *Letter to Ecgberht*.[58] As we enter the sixteenth century, there is no question at all about the importance that Matthew Parker attached to Bede,

Alfred and Ælfric; this was his main motive in building up the manuscript collection at his old college of Corpus Christi, Cambridge, which is still one of the chief foundations of Anglo-Saxon studies. The idea of England as 'an elect nation enjoying God's special favour' was not a Tudor coinage. To say that the sixteenth century saw many conditions of the tenth recreated is not to give artificial respiration to the myth of a primitive Church of England which Maitland smothered with such brio. But if Hooker had written, as he very nearly did write, 'there is not any man of the *ecclesia Anglorum* but the same man is also a member of the *regnum Anglorum*', Wulfstan would have understood him perfectly.[59] The same exclusive allegiance was in each era melded by the same sense of a special Church, and the same fear of a godless enemy. In the next century, a much greater Englishman than Hooker or Wulfstan (though no Anglican) had an exceptionally creative sense of England as 'an elect nation'. The works of Milton include a *History of Britain* which, as it stands, is in effect a history of Anglo-Saxon England. It is also the last serious attempt to understand historical process in terms of the relationship between God and a Chosen People.[60] But that was not of course the end of the idea. English imperialism was to have a notably Messianic flavour, and its nineteenth-century apogee was another age when the first English received special attention. And who is to say, in the light of current controversies, that we have yet heard the last of this self-consciously Chosen Race, or of its sense of a unique political and spiritual destiny?

NOTES

1   My thanks are due to Bishop Geoffrey Rowell, the late Dr Eric Stone and the Warden and Fellows of Keble College for originally inviting me to take part in the series of lectures commemorating the second centenary of the birth of John Keble; and to Simon Keynes, Veronica Ortenberg, Eric Stanley and Jenny Wormald for constructive comments on my lecture at the time. The notes that follow are largely confined to references given in the text, together with English translations where available.

2   G. Buchanan, *History of Scotland*, trans. J. Aikman, 4 vols (Glasgow, 1827), I, pp. 249–50, 275, 310, etc.; J. A. Duke, *The Columban Church* (Edinburgh, 1932, reprint 1957), p. 138 (cf. p. 110: King Nechtan's attack on Iona was 'the First Disruption'). Cf. M. Lynch, *Scotland: A New History* (Edinburgh, 1991), pp. 26, 31 and n. 11 (p. 452).

3   The late Kathleen Hughes, whose fine book, *The Church in Early Irish Society* (London, 1966) was in some ways the last and already faltering fling of the old school, wrote a posthumously published paper, 'The Celtic Church: is this a valid concept?', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 1 (1981), pp. 1–20; her answer was no, and on the significant grounds that the Welsh Church was quite different from the Irish as normally envisaged. See also W. Davies and P. Wormald, *The Celtic Church* (Audio Learning Tapes, 1980), and the former's review article in *Journal of Religious History* 8 (1974–5), pp. 406–11. But the revolution now overtaking this subject is best appreciated in two seminal papers by Richard Sharpe: 'Some problems concerning the organization of the Church in early medieval

Ireland', *Peritia* 3 (1984), pp. 230–70; and 'Churches and communities in early medieval Ireland: towards a pastoral model', in J. Blair and R. Sharpe (eds), *Pastoral Care before the Parish* (Leicester, 1992), pp. 81–109. [Yet see now 'Additional Note' 1, pp. 223–4]

4   Stenton, *ASE*, pp. 119–20, 125–6.

5   W. Levison, 'Die Iren und die fränkische Kirche', *HZ* 109 (1912), pp. 1–22, reprinted in *Aus rheinischer und fränkischer Frühzeit* (Düsseldorf, 1948), pp. 247–63. See J. Campbell, 'The first century of Christianity in England', *Ampleforth Journal* LXXVI (1971), pp. 12–29, at pp. 26–8, reprinted in *Essays*, pp. 49–67, pp. 64–5.

6   *Jonas, Vitae Columbani abbatis discipulorumque eius*, ed. B. Krusch (MGH, SRM IV, 1902), i 18–19, pp. 86–90; translation of these passages in E. Peters, *Monks, Bishops and Pagans* (Philadelphia, 1975), pp. 94–5.

7   *Adomnan's Life of Columba*, ed. A. O. and M. O. Anderson, 2nd edn (Oxford Medieval Texts, 1991); Campbell, 'First Century' pp. 12–29, at pp. 23–5, (*Essays,* pp. 60–2).

8   *HE* iii 14, pp. 156–7; *Jonas* i 19, p. 87.

9   *HE* iii 22, pp. 173–4; Plummer II, p. 260.

10 *Adomnan* Pr., pp. 186–7, and the Andersons' note *ad loc*.; cf. the introduction, p. 20: Adomnan also drew on Gregory's *Dialogues*.

11 *HE* iii 4, p. 134: 'ordine inusitato'. See the papers of Hughes and Sharpe (as n. 3); and further for Wales, W. Davies, *Wales in the Early Middle Ages* (Leicester, 1982), pp. 158–64.

12 *HE* iii 4, pp. 133–4. A. A. M. Duncan, 'Bede, Iona and the Picts', in R. H. C. Davis and J. M. Wallace-Hadrill (eds), *The Writing of History in the Middle Ages: Essays presented to R. W. Southern* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 1–42, at pp. 9–10.

13 *HE* iii 19, pp. 163–4; *Vita Sancti Fursei*, ed. B. Krusch (MGH, SRM IV, 1902) i 6, p. 437. But, for a rather more positive evaluation of Irish missionary enterprise, together with an instructive account of its secular legal context, see T. M. Charles-Edwards, 'The social background to Irish "Peregrinatio"', *Celtica 11, Studies presented to M. Dillon* (Dublin, 1976), pp. 43–59.

14 *HE* iii 5, 26, iv 3, 27, pp. 135–6, 190–1, 210–11, 269–70, together with *Bede's Life of Cuthberht*, ed. B. Colgrave, *Two Lives of Cuthberht* (Cambridge, 1985), ix, xvi, pp. 184–7, 206–13.

15 A. Thacker, 'Bede's Ideal of Reform', *Ideal*, pp. 130–53, at pp. 133–46; Ep. Ecgb. 3, p. 406, trans. *EHD* I, p. 800; *HE* iii 5, p. 136.

16 *HE* iv 27, pp. 270–1, *Life of Cuthberht* xvi, pp. 208–9, and cf. Gregory's 'Responses', *HE* i 27, pp. 48–9.

17 *HE* iii 5, pp. 136–7; cf. Gregory's letter to Augustine, *HE* i 30, p. 65: 'Nam duris mentibus simul omnia abscidere impossibile esse non dubium est, quia et is, qui summum locum ascendere nititur, gradibus vel passibus, non autem saltibus elevatur.'

18 J. Campbell, 'Bede', in T. A. Dorey (ed.), *Latin Historians* (London, 1966), pp. 159–90, at p. 182, reprinted in *Essays*, pp. 1–27, at p. 25.

19 The best account of these matters remains the introduction by C. W. Jones to his edition, *Bedae Opera de Temporibus* (Cambridge, Mass., 1946), pp. 55–104; but see also Duncan, as n. 12, together with the introduction by M. Walsh and D. Ó Cróinín, to their edition and translation of *Cummian's Letter De Controversia Paschali* and the *De Ratione Conputandi* (Pontifical Institute, Toronto, 1988), pp. 3–51.

20 *HE* iii 25, iv 5, pp. 181–9, pp. 214–17.

21 *Vit. Wilf* 10, pp. 202–4; *Cummian*, pp. 56–97.

22 *HE* pr. 'Ad Albinum', p. 3. Bede's founding abbot, Biscop, had been abbot at Canter-
bury: HA 3, p. 367.

23 P. Meyvaert, *Bede and Gregory the Great* (Jarrow Lecture, 1964/5), pp. 16–18.

24 *HE* iii 25, p. 184; cf. *Cummian*, pp. 72–5.

25 Laws I Cn. Pr, II Cn. 1, 62, 65, *Gesetze*; trans. *EHD* I, pp. 454–5, 464. The usage derives
increased, not reduced, significance from the fact that 'Dena' and 'Dena lage' are
otherwise envisaged here as entities distinct from their 'English' counterparts.

26 *EHD* II, pp. 119, 125. This is the 'D' version, probably reflecting the outlook of
Ealdred, from 1061 the (southerner) archbishop of York, but drawing for 1052 on
'C', a southern text [see now, chapter 7, pp. 235–40.

27 *Ælfric, Lives of the Saints*, ed. W. W. Skeat (2 vols, EETS 76, 82, Oxford, 1881–5) xix
(lines 16–17), I, pp. 414–15.

28 F. Kluge, 'Fragment eines angelsächsischen Briefes', *Englische Studien* viii (1885), pp. 62–
3, trans. *EHD* I, pp. 895–6. See N. P. Brooks, *History and Myth, Forgery and Truth*
(University of Birmingham Inaugural Lecture, 1986), p. 3 [reprinted in *Anglo-Saxon
Myths: State and Church 400–1066* (London, 2000), pp. 1–19, at p. 3] who points out
that the hairstyle, presumably that of Cnut's court, is sported by Normans on the Bayeux
Tapestry [see now 'Additional Note' 3, p. 227–8.

29 See (among much else), K.-F. Werner, 'Les nations et le sentiment national dans l'Europe
médiévale', *RH* 244 (1970), pp. 285–304, at pp. 292–4; H. Fuhrmann, *Germany in the
High Middle Ages*, trans. T. Reuter (Cambridge, 1986), p. 19.

30 F. J. Byrne, *Irish Kings and High Kings* (London, 1973), pp. 46–69; D. Ó'Cróinín,
'Nationality and Kingship in pre-Norman Ireland', *Historical Studies XI*, ed. T. Moody
(Belfast, 1978), pp. 1–35, at pp. 5–8.

31 S 207, trans. *EHD* I, p. 528; *Select English Historical Documents of the Ninth and Tenth
Centuries* x, ed. F. Harmer (Cambridge, 1914), pp. 14, 48.

32 H. Sweet (rev. D. Whitelock), *An Anglo-Saxon Reader* (15th edn, Oxford, 1967), pp. 4–
7, trans. *EHD* I, pp. 888–9.

33 Stenton, *ASE*, pp. 33–6, drawing upon his celebrated paper, 'The Supremacy of the
Mercian Kings', *EHR* XXXIII (1918), pp. 433–52 (reprinted in *Prep. ASE*, pp. 48–66).

34 Ch. 3, above; S. Fanning, 'Bede, *Imperium* and the *Bretwaldas*', *Speculum* 66 (1991), pp.
1–26; S. Keynes, 'Rædwald the Bretwalda' in *Voyage to the Other World: the Legacy
of Sutton Hoo*, ed. C. B. Kendall and P. S. Wells, Medieval Studies at Minnesota 5(1992),
pp. 103–23. [Professor Keynes admits to having encouraged his students to wear
T-shirts with the logo, 'BAN THE BRETWALDA'!]

35 *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies, the Second Series*, ed. M. Godden (EETS, Suppl. Ser. 5, 1979),
ix, p. 74.

36 W. Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History* (Princeton, NJ, 1988), pp. 240, 250–3;
Fanning, pp. 20–2. In what follows, I am of course indebted to the invaluable P. F. Jones, *A
Concordance to Bede's Ecclesiastical History* (Cambridge, Mass., 1929), pp. 29–31, (also 222–
6, 341–2, 381–2, 403–4, 429–31, 448–51, 481–3), and the following citations are given,
as in Jones, by page and line number of Plummer's edition. [For further discussions of this
issue over the last dozen years, see 'Additional Note' 2, pp. 224–7.]

37 125:14, 142:7, 142:16, 30:24, 348:13. Other 'secular' usages: 33:4, 42:19, 45:2, 82:4,
     85:16, 89:10, 89:22, 114:1, 196:4, 201:16, 205:5, 325:6, 327:20, 351:25, 352:28,
     353:14. 'Ecclesiastical' meanings (*denoting a papal letter): 5:3, 6:25, 42:11, 42:22,
     42:30, 46:10, 48:6, 48:9, 48:29*, 49:26*, 49:32*, 51:17*, 52:7*, 54:2*, 63:22*, 65:6*,
     66:18*, 67:25*, 67:28*, 73:7, 76:33, 78:26, 79:19, 80:25, 83:20, 83:30, 87:9, 88:14,
     88:22, 88:26, 89:6, 94:4, 116:29, 125:18, 139:13, 196:7, 196:10, 196:15, 201:17,
     202:5, 204:10, 204:17, 204:22, 205:13, 238:28, 241:34, 242:28, 270:33*, 294:12,
     295:3, 327:4*, 347:7, 347:8, 347:10, 347:12, 353:16, 357:1.
38 Possible 'Northumbrian' (or other 'Anglian'): 26:26, 82:22, 84:2, 97:19, 117:25, 118:20,
     128:21, 129:20, 132:10, 133:30, 145:10, 164:14, 184:17, 245:2, 253:25, 259:1, 284:4.
     'Non-Anglian': 9:11, 11:14, 21:26, 45:6, 81:13, 85:22, 90:12, 138:6, 237:10, 331:11.
39 30:29, 31:15, 31:22, 31:28, 42:4, 80:13, 296:13. To be added here are the two cases
     where 'Angle' is used for the East Anglian kingdom: 107:2, 167:29.
40 Æthelfrith, etc.: 71:8, 71:11, 71:17, 83:34; Edwin, etc.: 89:25, 97:12, 97:16, 100:23*,
     100:24*, 109:9, 119:1*, 124:14; Oswald: 131:12, 132:15, 137:31; Oswiu: 180:9,
     229:26; Aldfrith: 315:18. Perhaps the best case of this type is the 'apostate kings':
     128:12, 145:2.
41 323:31; cf. 132:22, 134:31, and 191:26, 135:18, 170:20, 171:14, 179:26, 190:11,
     205:18, 205:19, 299:16, 324:34.
42 133:20, 267:10, 267:12, 267:16, 267:20, 267:21; cf. 72:4, 97:7, 266:17, 332:22,
     345:28.
43 Mayo etc.: 213:2, 213:6, 213:20, 213:30, 214:1, 214:5; 'Angli' in Ireland, etc.: 192:10,
     192:20, 195:27; relations with neighbours: 351:6, 351:9, 351:11, 351:16; Caedmon:
     259:5. Cf. 137:4, 189:21, 195:29, 213:10, 269:28, 315:25, 347:20. The original total
     of 179 is reached by adding eighty-eight to eighty-two, then including seven plus two
     from n. 39.
44 *HE* v 2–6, 12, 15–17, 19, 21, pp. 282–92, 303–10, 316–19, 322–30, 332–46: this
     accounts for forty out of sixty-eight pages of Plummer's edition, excluding the two
     summarizing chapters.
45 *HE* v 23–4, pp. 348–56.
46 For the record, 'Angli' are a singular *gens* fifty-three times, a *genus* thrice, but plural
     'gentes' only thrice, and 'populi' five times. They belong to a single *ecclesia* ten times, and
     to plural 'ecclesiae' nine (especially when Bede is discussing unification).
47 See Gregory's prefatory dedication of his *Moralia in Job* to Bishop Leander of Seville, ed.
     M. Adriaen (CCSL CXLIII, 1979), 4, p. 6.
48 *Aliquot Quaestionum Liber* viii, *PL* XCIII, 460–2; on its authenticity as a work of Bede,
     see Mayr-Harting, *Coming*, p. 207, with reference. See, in similar vein: *In Regum Librum
     XXX Quaestiones*, ed. D. Hurst (CCSL CXIX, 1962), pp. 296–322.
49 *Bedae Explanatio Apocalypsis*, ed. R. Gryson (CCSL CXXIA, 2001), Pr. 140–1, p. 233
     (line 134).
50 *HE* i 1–23, pp. 9–43; cf. v 23, p. 351, Ep. Ecgb. 4–13, pp. 407–18.
51 See n. 32, and cf. especially *HE* iv 2, pp. 204–5.
52 Laws Alfred Intr. 49:6–9, ed. *Gesetze* (the last part trans. *EHD* I, pp. 408–9, but for a full
     translation, one must turn to *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, ed. B. Thorpe
     (London, 1840), pp. 20–7); cf. *MEL*, ch. 5, sect. 1, ch. 6, sect. 1.

53   'Sermon of the Wolf', trans. *EHD* I, pp. 933–4 (and samples of Wulfstan's laws, pp. 442–52, 454–67); [full discussion, *MEL*, ch. 6, sect. 3]; Alc. Ep. 17, p. 47.

54   C8th/9th *HE* MSS remaining in England: H. Gneuss, 'A preliminary list of manuscripts written or owned in England up to 1100', *ASE* 9 (1980), pp. 1–60, nos 25, 367, 377, 863; Latin MSS 900–1066: Gneuss 75, 181, 555, 630, 759, with BL Egerton MS 3278 (Mynors, 'Textual Introduction' to *Eccl. Hist.*, p. xlvii); Old English MSS: Gneuss 22, 39, 330, 357, 668, 673. In addition, two Latin MSS are datable 1066–1100: Gneuss 238, 487 (the same goes for *c*.5 of the 25 Ælfric MSS). MSS of Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Rule* are 16 (two post-1066); of the *Rule of St Benedict*, 14 (one post-1066).

55   R. H. C. Davis, 'Bede after Bede', in C. Harper-Bill (ed.), *Studies in Medieval History presented to R. Allen Brown* (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 103–16, at pp. 104–14. Exact totals from Mynors (as n. 54) are: Benedictine 14, Augustinian 8, Cistercian (Jervaulx, New-minster, Sawley) 3, secular cathedral 1, unprovenanced 9.

56   *The Chronicle of Battle Abbey*, ed. E. Searle (OMT, Oxford, 1980), pp. 178–81; E. van Houts, 'The Ship List of William the Conqueror', *Anglo-Norman Studies* X (1987), pp. 159–83.

57   On William, see A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c.550–c.1307*, pp. 166–85, especially pp. 173–4; and on Orderic, further to the 'General Introduction' in Vol. I of the superb edition by M. Chibnall, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis* (6 vols, OMT, Oxford, 1969–80), Davis (as n. 55), p. 116.

58   E. Tatnall, 'John Wyclif and *Ecclesia Anglicana*', *JEH* 20 (1969), pp. 19–43, esp. pp. 34–7.

59   Cf. P. Corrigan and D. Sayer, *The Great Arch: English State Formation as Cultural Revolution* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 57–60, at p. 59.

60   C. Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution* (London, 1977), esp. pp. 279–84.

Additional Note

1   Since this article was first published twelve years ago, the leading living authorities on early Christian 'Celtic' culture have been pronouncing on the character of the Irish, Welsh, Breton, and even Cornish and Manx Churches: D. Ó Cróinín, *Early Medieval Ireland 400–1200* (London, 1995), chs 6–8; T. M. Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland* (Cambridge, 2000), chs 4–10; and (for the third time), W. Davies, 'The Myth of the Celtic Church', in N. Edwards and A. Lane, *The Early Church in Wales and the West* (Oxbow Monograph 16, Oxford, 1992), pp. 12–21. None of these authoritative discussions lends the slightest support to the notion of a 'Celtic Church'. On the contrary, Professor Davies offers a devastating *exposé* of the instincts (no other word seems appropriate) that have embedded the notion of a 'Celtic Church' in the minds of the semi-learned and generally interested: 'Denizens of our industrialized world like to believe in the saintly hero, and choose to patronize this escape route. It is as suitable a subject for nostalgia about a (non-existent) bygone age as elves and pixies; it complements the twee, folksy, whimsical' (p. 13); 'the Celtic Church idea holds a place in the history of *mentalités*: its proper historical context is the complex of religious and intellectual attitudes surrounding the Anglican Settlement' (p. 13 – she could have included the

making of the Scots Kirk). Professor Davies concludes that there *may* be a case for envisaging a characteristically 'Celtic' (perhaps better called 'insular') Christian tradition on the cusp of the fifth and sixth centuries, when British clergy like Finnian and of course Patrick himself were converting their Irish neighbours (cf. R. Sharpe, 'Gildas as a Father of the Church', and D. N. Dumville, 'Gildas and Uinniau', in M. Lapidge and D. Dumville (eds), *Gildas: New Approaches* (Woodbridge, 1984), pp. 191–205, 207–14). The hallmarks of the tradition at this stage were a distinct conservatism, even archaism, and a yet more distinctive interest in the works of Pelagius. But the history of the Irish, Welsh, Scots, Breton, Cornish and Manx Church*es* thereafter *diverges*, there being little in common by the eighth century between the Christianities of the Bretons, Welsh and Irish, or even between rival Irish Churches. What has happened in historiographical practice is that Bede's account of Iona and its Lindisfarne offshoot has served as a template for the image of the 'Celtic' Churches as a whole. Yet no amount of scholarship, even as weighty as Professor Davies', seems to have shifted what is if anything a *growing* belief in the distinctiveness of 'Celtic' spirituality. Perhaps the best illustration is Melvyn Bragg's remarkable novel *Credo* (London, 1996), which, he told me, drew on his tutorials about Bede at Wadham College, Oxford, in the later 1950s with Lawrence Stone, no less. But we also hear from many others about a 'Celtic' spirituality, whose most singular quality seems to be envisaged as closeness to nature, simplicity, even purity of approach, contrasting with the pomps and authoritarianism of the 'Roman' Church. It is difficult to resist the impression that what Protestant confessionalism did for the idea of a 'Celtic Church' until the 1960s is now being done by 'new age' paganism: what Dr Ortenberg has aptly called the 'Celtic bandwagon'.

2   Something of an academic cottage industry has developed around the genesis of the idea of 'the English': that is, the conception that all speakers of a Germanic language in Britain came to be called 'Angles', whether or not specifically Anglian in one-time 'ethnic' affiliation (so in effect from one of the kingdoms north of the Thames), because this was how Bede used the term, following the lead of Pope Gregory and the Church his disciples founded at Canterbury. The late Professor Geoffrey Elton was persuaded (*The English*, Oxford, 1992, pp. 1–3), so giving the theory wider currency, but not all expert opinion has followed suit.

(a) S. Foot, 'The Making of *Angelcynn*: English Identity before the Norman Conquest; *TRHS* 6th ser. 6 (1996), 25–49 at pp. 42–3, suggests that Gregory might have got the idea that Britain was populated by Angles rather than (as western opinion normally had it) Saxons from his service at Constantinople, where *Procopius, History of the Wars*, ed. H. B. Dewing (5 vols, Loeb series, 1928), viii.20.7–10, V, pp. 254–5, records that a Frankish embassy had brought along 'Angiloi' from the island of 'Brittia' in order to prove Frankish rule over them (and see her n. 74 for the variety of suggestions as to which Frankish king this was and how far the claim was substantiated). This could be so; but were such the source of papal intelligence, we might have expected Gregory to address not just Angles and Britons (as implicitly he did) but also 'Frisians', the third people said by Procopius to inhabit the island; moreover, were Frankish diplomats the source of Byzantine information, we might expect them to know of 'Jutes' and perhaps Saxons too (cf. I. Wood, *The Merovingian North Sea* (Alingsås, 1983), 'Frankish Hegemony in England' in M. Carver (ed.), *The Age of Sutton Hoo* (Woodbridge, 1992), pp. 235–41. I conclude that, whatever

the Pope previously thought, an encounter with (actual, i.e. Deiran) Angles in Rome decisively influenced the view he propagated so influentially.

(b) For his part, Professor Nicholas Brooks began by questioning the role of Canterbury (which as the acknowledged authority on its history, he was well placed to do), *History and Myth, Forgery and Truth* (University of Birmingham, 1986), pp. 4–5, reprinted in *Anglo-Saxon Myths* (as ch. 4, Bibl. App., p. 161), pp. 1–19, at pp. 3–5; he then took the older view that 'warrior kings and dynasties of the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries... imposed their own myths asserting that their peoples were distinctively Angle, or Saxon, or Jutish when in fact this was at most true only of their own dynasties.' Yet the awkward fact remains that the dynasty that finally imposed its myths on one and all was the West *Saxon*; and while Alfred spoke of 'Angelcynn' and was its self-appointed spokesman (below), there is no evidence that any earlier king of his dynasty thought himself or his people Anglian/'English' (but see c, d below). Professor Brooks has latterly come a bit nearer to how I read the story: 'Canterbury, Rome and the Construction of English Identity', in J. M. H. Smith (ed.), *Early Medieval Rome and the Christian West: Essays in Honour of Donald A. Bullough* (Leiden, 2000), pp. 221–47, at pp. 221–2, 243–6; *Bede and the English* (Jarrow Lecture, 1999/2000), pp. 5–20; and 'From British to English Christianity: Deconstructing Bede's interpretation of the Conversion' (lecture at ISAS, Phoenix, Ariz., August 2003, publication forthcoming). Professor Brooks now seems to have no doubt that Bede was involved in a major 'ethnogenesis' project, but is still disinclined to trace its inspiration to Canterbury, despite fully recognizing Gregory's own crucial place in the story ('Canterbury, Rome', pp. 225–9, 243–5). He ponders instead (*Bede and the English*, pp. 17–20) the part Whitby may have played in transmitting Gregory's vision to its Wearside neighbour: there is 'no trace of any Canterbury claim to ecclesiastical authority over the English in the few authentic... texts from the pontificates of... Theodore and of his successor', whereas the *Whitby Life of Gregory* is the earliest source for the story of the marketed 'Anglian' slaves, and this abbey was in a sense the *Eigenkloster* of the Deiran dynasty. Yet can we not sense an inconsistency here? On the one hand ('Canterbury, Rome', p. 222), 'Canterbury's prolonged campaign of *imitatio Romae* was an essential element in the process of English ethnogensis... of constructing a single *gens Anglorum*'; on the other (*Bede and the English*, pp. 18–19), the inspiration for Bede's programmatic 'ethnic' vocabulary was 'not directly Gregorian'; it took a northern tradition recorded somewhat crudely and in a single (continental) manuscript to pass on an idea that Canterbury itself contrived to forget in pursuit of wider ambitions; a notion that, as Professor Brooks says (p. 20), had certainly become preferred usage at Monkwearmouth when penning Abbot Ceolfrith's dedication page to the *Codex Amiatinus*. There is no doubt that in the (very) 'few texts' reflecting archiepiscopal action in Bede's lifetime, and especially after whatever passed at Rome in 679 in connection with Wilfrid's affairs, the pontiffs dwell on the authority over Britain at large that was the other part of their papal commission. But they came to stress their 'English' sphere of operation just as soon as the re-establishment of the York archbishopric sidelined the broader claim; would they in the interim have wholly forgotten the other face of the pontifical diptych with which Gregory entrusted them? Whitby must itself have owed most of what it knew of Gregory and his mission from its own Canterbury links, as Colgrave argued, and it remains unclear (cf. Appendix below, pp. 267–76) that

the *Whitby Life* was a source for Bede – who presents a notably less garbled version of the slave-boys episode. If, despite Bede's repeatedly and handsomely acknowledged debt to Canterbury, we are looking for an ethnogenetic intermediary, we might do worse than think of the hyperactive Wilfrid, probably himself a Deiran, whose abbey of Ripon was initially joined by the future Abbot Ceolfrith (VC 3, pp. 388–9), and who had his own Canterbury connections, not least his (probable) biographer (*HE* iv 2, p. 205), who used the term 'Angle' generically at least as soon as Bede. But all in all, the chain from Gregory to Canterbury to Monkwearmouth, and so out among Bede's widening audience, seems the most economical reading of sparse yet multivalent evidence. Professor Brooks also finds (*Bede and the English*, pp. 6–7), 'semantic confusion' in my presentation of Bede's use of 'Angle' (above, pp. 213–5), the problem being that 'Bede does not distinguish between "Angles" and '"English",' the same word of course. Quite so: since the term *cannot* mean (*sc.* ethnically) 'Anglian', i.e. of notional Angeln ancestry, each time Bede uses it, the blurring is just what signifies. I naturally regret not making myself clearer in my paper's original form; in an attempt at further clarity I have added two clauses, '(sixty-five … items)', p. 215, and in n. 43, 'The original total of 179 … plus two from n. 39' (and tidied up the figures a bit, but without an effect on overall statistics). It may help if I state here more categorically that Bede (as good as) *never* uses 'Angle' *in a sense exclusive of Saxons or Jutes* except in connection with the *Adventus* (cf. n. 39), and may (almost) *always* have a wider sense in mind. Yet in the last resort, it does not matter for my theory whatever Bede himself meant by 'Angle', so long as we accept that his *History* could be, and very soon was, read as a history of all who thereby qualified for the designation; and that he was thus, truly, the 'Father of *English* history'.

(c) The other noted scholar to modify my argument is Professor Thomas Charles-Edwards, 'Language and Society among the Insular Celts, AD 400–1000', in M. J. Green (ed.), *The Celtic World* (London, 1995), pp. 703–36, at p. 733, an argument developed in 'The Making of Nations in Britain and Ireland in the Early Middle Ages', in *Lordship and Learning: Studies in Memory of Trevor Aston*, ed. R. Evans (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 11–37, which he was kind enough to show me prior to publication. Professor Charles-Edwards is much struck by use of the term 'englisc' in implied or explicit contradistinction to 'wilisc' by Laws Ine 24, 46:1, 54:2, 74, and it is certainly noteworthy to find the term in so early a *Saxon* context. The difficulty is that we cannot be sure that Ine's laws as transmitted by Alfred's were not extended and revised in the two centuries between the two (*MEL*, pp. 103–5); and in any case, Bishop Eorcenwald, one of Ine's named advisers, may have been Kentish (ch. 4, pp. 142–5, where the evidence is understated: cf. I. Wood, *The Merovingian Kingdoms* (London, 1994), p. 177). Use of 'English' alongside 'Welsh' seems likely to have arisen, like *Lex Salica*'s distinctions between Frank and Roman (as Professor Charles-Edwards notes), and William the Conqueror's use of 'French' and 'English' when legislating on the murder fine (*MEL*, pp. 105–6, 399), as a way of regulating inter-community hostilities: this need not tell us anything about the use of 'englisc' as a term for Germanic as opposed to Celtic language; and Professor Charles-Edwards and I agree that the normal (though not Bedan) early term for the 'Anglo-Saxon' language was 'Saxon', as one would expect from continental pedagoguery. As I interpret Jones's *Concordance*, Bede (when not talking of *Old* Saxons) gives Saxon nominally or adjectivally nineteen times, against 'Angle' 179. Of these, seven contrast Saxon and Angle

in an *Adventus* context (n. 39, above); six are from Gildas or continental sources always inclined to use the word for northern pirates, 17:14, 30:20, 31:5, 38:8, 196:20 (a by now rare papal 'lapse'), 293:31; five more designate actual West, East or South Saxons, 140:27, 32, 173:6, 233:13, 21 – though the first three may mean 'Saxon' *language*; and finally, two are explicitly linguistic in application, 239:15, 296:1; cf. 205:3: unlike Professor John Hines, 'Philology, Archaeology and the *adventus Saxonum vel Anglorum*', in A. Bammes-berger and A. Wollmann (eds), *Britain 400–600: Language and History* (Anglistische Forschungen 205, Heidelberg, 1990), pp. 17–33, at n. 43, I see no reason to read Bishop Tobias of Rochester's mastery of 'Saxonica lingua' 'as implying that he was not an Englishman'). My (properly tentative) conclusion is that Bede used 'Saxon' when strict accuracy required it, especially in a (semi) continental context, or when it was in his sources, sources which included the Theodoran school at Canterbury. Given how often he says 'lingua Anglorum' when he must mean 'language of the English', and his pronounced tendency to use 'Anglus' for 'Englishman' overall, it seems significant that he *ever* reverts to 'Saxon' in this context. I would thus expect the word for the language to have been **seaxisc* before 'englisc' became normative.

(d) This covers the objection to chapter 3 as originally formulated raised in the valuable discussion by Dr Susan Reynolds, 'What Do We Mean by "Anglo-Saxon" and "Anglo-Saxons"? ', *Journal of British Studies* 24 (1985), pp. 395–414, esp. pp. 404–6, and n. 15 – to which the first version of this chapter should certainly have referred. It remains to notice the case ever more powerfully put by Professor Simon Keynes, e.g. 'King Alfred and the Mercians', in M. Blackburn and D. Dumville (eds), *Kings, Currency and Alliances: History and Coinage of Southern England in the Ninth Century* (Studies in Anglo-Saxon History IX, Woodbridge, 1998), pp. 1–45, at pp. 34–45, and 'Edward, King of the Anglo-Saxons', in N. J. Higham and D. H. Hill (eds), *Edward the Elder. 899–924* (London, 2001), pp. 40–66, at pp. 57–62: that Alfred and his immediate successors did not in any event think of themselves as 'Kings of the English' but 'of the Anglo-Saxons'. This is no place to enlist in that joust. For now, I note only that each party making use of that compound had every reason to emphasize Saxon as well as 'Anglo-' elements in the new hegemony: the scribes of the West Saxon court and churches (Abingdon, Glastonbury, Malmesbury, Wilton, Winchester, plus S 345, for Worcester but concerning (Middle Saxon?) London, cf. S. Keynes and M. Lapidge, *Alfred the Great* (London, 1983), pp. 227–8); and Asser the *Welshman*! Alfred never used 'Angelseaxe' or equivalent in his own writings – indeed the term is as good as *hapax* in Æthelstan's charter (chapter 3, 'Additional Note' 1) – a Winchester document at that. In legislating, he was (in traditionalist mode) 'Westseaxna cyning' or at the apex of 'ealles Angelcynnes witan'.

3   The wider question of whether we may think of 'national' feeling at anything like so early a date has become something of a *cause célèbre* in the last two decades. Professor James Campbell and I continue to give a strongly affirmative answer: cf. Campbell, 'The Late Anglo-Saxon State: A Maximum View', *PBA* 87 (1994), pp. 39–65, esp. pp. 47–51, reprinted in Campbell, *State*, pp. 1–30, at pp. 10–14; and my '*Engla Lond*: the Making of an Allegiance', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 7 (1994), pp. 1–24, reprinted in my *Legal Culture in the Early Medieval West* (London, 1999), pp. 359–82, together with 'On Second Thoughts: the Making of England', *History Today* 45 (1995), pp. 36–42, and 'The Eternal Angle', *Times Literary Supplement*, March 16th 2001, pp. 3–4. I resume the

debate in at least two further papers: 'Germanic Power Structures: the Early English Experience', in L. Scales and O. Zimmer (eds), *Power and the Nation in European History* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 105–24; and 'Pre-modern "State" and "Nation": Definite or Indefinite?', *Staat im Frühen Mittelalter* S. R. Airlie, W. Pohl and H. Reimitz (eds) Forschungen Zur Geschichte dos Mittelalters 11 (Vienna, 2006), pp. 179–89. 'May we, *can* we, talk of an early medieval "State"?', my Dublin Denis Bethell lecture of April 2001, which I hope to publish shortly in *Peritia*, covers the rise of the combat in suitably polemical style. All I would wish to add here is that it is surely no accident that Father Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge, 1997), the work of a great priest as well as one of his century's finest ecclesiastical historians, sees no problem in tracking strong national sentiment way back into the Middle Ages – and not just for the obvious reason that he is better aware of what the Bible could do to this effect than any other modern commentator, but because he is also the foremost historian of *African* Christianity.

7

How do we know so much about Anglo-Saxon Deerhurst?

Y title may raise eyebrows. Professional historians nowadays have a percep-
tible tendency to look gift horses in the mouth. Is it not enough that we do
have historical as well as architectural evidence for Anglo-Saxon Deerhurst? Why
should we worry about how we know? My answer to this question is best put in the
words of James Campbell: 'our knowledge of so much hangs by so narrow a thread
that it is certain as certain can be that there was a great deal about Anglo-Saxon
England about which we do not know, and never will know, anything.'[1] I shall
essentially be arguing in this lecture that we owe our historical evidence of pre-
Conquest Deerhurst to a series of lucky chances: a lawsuit involving a bishop who
kept good archives; the murder by drunken Danes of an archbishop of Canterbury
who had briefly been there; the link between its mid-eleventh-century lord and a
dominant influence on two important chronicles; and I shall conclude by suggesting
that we are pretty lucky to have the church itself. Historians do not on the whole much
like chance. It leaves them with little else to say. But it is appropriate that Anglo-
Saxonists should sometimes dwell on it. The bulk of our knowledge of English history
before 1066 derives directly or indirectly from a few towering figures: Bede, Alfred,
Æthelwold, Wulfstan. Our ability to look beyond their dominant perspectives does
indeed depend on a set of flukes: the preservation of Domesday Book above all; but
also the obsession with monsters that induced an early-eleventh-century scribe to copy
out *Beowulf*, a poem unparalleled not only in England but also in Europe as a whole;
the ploughing away of part of the mound that caused tomb-robbers to miss the Sutton
Hoo treasure by a few feet; the storm that persuaded the community of St Cuthbert to
abandon its projected journey to Ireland, whilst not preventing them from fishing the
Lindisfarne Gospels out of a watery grave. As Anglo-Saxonists, we cultivate the
borders of prehistory. We must never take knowledge for granted.

   Another reasonable objection would be that we do not know much about pre-
Conquest Deerhurst. This is of course true. I shall here discuss one document
preserved only in copies of two hundred or more years later; a few lines in one

saint's Life written just after the Conquest; and three entries in a pair of later eleventh/early twelfth-century chronicles – little enough to fill an hour. The fact remains that we know more about Anglo-Saxon Deerhurst than about nearly any other extant building with significant Anglo-Saxon elements. No two experts would supply quite the same *corpus* of Anglo-Saxon architecture, but a figure of some 250 churches with a plausible case for a pre-1066 construction would probably command consensus.[2] Discarding such obviously special cases as Hexham and Ripon, Monkwearmouth and Jarrow, Sherborne and one or more (?) Elmhams, a mere twenty-six feature in more or less acceptable narrative sources, usually no more than once; it is worth adding that five of the narrative references are from Bede and seven from the prolific Durham material.[3] Ten churches appear in documentary evidence (seven just once), and six of these are also found in narratives.[4] Well under half the Taylor-listed churches are mentioned in Domesday Book – though since the great survey contrives to ignore Deerhurst too, its other oversights arouse no great surprise. The only profiles comparable with Deerhurst's are those of St Mary's Stow, and the Kentish minsters, Dover, Minster-Sheppey and Reculver; we shall see that these are revealing parallels. Comparisons otherwise are with Repton (a couple of *Chronicle* entries, an early saint's *Life*, and a distant twelfth-century retrospect), Brixworth (one semi-documentary reference), or Wing (no evidence at all). It is evidently necessary to explain why Deerhurst should loom so relatively large; and if it is not necessary, it is still an opportunity to ponder what we know, or think we know.

Deerhurst makes its first appearance in the historical record in or shortly after 804. It is a fleeting appearance, but also an extremely important one.[5] The context is a document in which Æthelric son of Æthelmund announced that he had been vindicated before a synod of the archbishop of Canterbury, the king of the Mercians, and the leading ecclesiastical and secular officials of the kingdom, in his right to dispose as he wished of the estate at 'Westminster' (i.e. the minster of Westbury) which his 'kinsmen' had previously given to him. This right was vested in 'writings' that the archbishop perused before judging in Æthelric's favour. The implication is that these writings were the 'books' (i.e. charters) whereby the estate was originally granted to his kin. The text goes on to tell how, on returning from a pilgrimage to Rome, he declared before another synod what he intended to do with his '*hereditas*'. The central issue was once again what was to happen to Westbury: Æthelric assigned it (with 'Stoke') to his mother, Ceolburh, with reversion after her death to the church of Worcester. The intention was evidently that Worcester's long-term interest in the estate would encourage it to protect Ceolburh 'against the claims of the Berkeley people' (as Æthelric called them): he envisaged that she might well have to make out a legal case against them and would presumably need allies. But Westbury was not the only property at stake. Æthelric also bequeathed a thirty-hide estate to Gloucester and another eleven hides to one Wærferth, also with reversion to Worcester. Most important for our purposes, he granted four estates to 'the place which is called Deerhurst for me and for my father Æthelmund, if it should happen

that *my* body rests there'. I emphasize the word 'my' because the sense of his proviso must surely be that his father's body was already buried at Deerhurst.

How are these transactions to be explained? The first point to make is that Æthelric was right to be worried about 'Berkeley people'. Twenty years after the synod that had originally found for him, Bishop Heahberht of Worcester appeared before a similar council in dispute 'with the *familia* at Berkeley about the *hereditas* of Æthelric son of Æthelmund, that is the monastery called Westbury'.[6]

He still had the 'books' as well as the property, and was therefore allowed to organize an oath of 'servants of God, priests, deacons and many monks' that Westbury was indeed his. The oath duly took place, and the document recording these proceedings gives the names of no less than fifty-six of those who took it, three abbots, six deacons and the rest priests; the bishop had evidently rustled up a fair proportion of his diocesan manpower in his own support. The prolonged bitterness of the disputes over 'the inheritance of Æthelric' is probably the very reason why so much of the documentation about it survives. Indeed, I have argued elsewhere that Worcester almost certainly extended it by resorting to the forgery of charters whereby Westbury was granted directly to them rather than to Æthelmund, while a connected property at Stoke went not to Æthelmund with full freedom of disposition, but to Æthelmund with reversion to Worcester after two lives.[7]

If we are to understand how cases like this arose and persisted, we have to appreciate that it is not a simple matter of ecclesiastical principle at war with worldly interests (though Church records are of course prone to make it sound like that). To begin with the case for Æthelric's and the bishop's opponents, we must look, for a brief if doubtless painful moment, into the question of 'bookland', one of the real hornets' nests of Anglo-Saxon studies.[8] Books, that is charters, were the principal means of bestowing land on the Church. Since they were meant for the Church, they had to be *permanent* gifts, gifts in perpetuity; whereas there is evidence that gifts made by kings or lords to lay followers were not normally permanent but revocable, on the death or dissatisfaction of either party. On the other hand, the permanently held property of early Anglo-Saxon laymen was normally subject to the claims of their kin. It was also necessary, therefore, that land that was intended for transmission to the Church should be *freely disposable* by its recipient. Thus, the two points stressed by the earliest charters are that donors are granting for ever and irrevocably, and that donees may do what they like with what they have devoutly received. But there is a critical catch. What do owners normally like to do with their property? The answer, surely, is to give it to the *heir of their choice*. This may be an elder son already well provided for, a younger son or daughter that is otherwise missing out, a favourite maiden aunt or a cats' home. What owners do not like is being told what to do with it. In an early medieval context, those demanding that property be disposed of in a particular way were the kin, the family entitled to retain hereditary lands according to traditional custom. The equivalent to the cats' home was the Church, though its chances were perhaps rather better in that one's best hope of

eternal salvation was burial among grateful priests who would pray for that eternally. But there was a very real risk that this new type of perpetually tenured gift would be transferred to *chosen* members of a family. Perhaps the likeliest outcome was that churches would be founded for the immediate benefit of a family's disadvantaged members, most obviously an unmarriageable female, who would then safeguard the long-term interests of the wider kin by the prayers she organized.[9] If this were what happened, then there is a further twist. The more bookland was *de facto* confined to a family over several generations, the more like family property it would come to seem, and thus the more likely to be effectively claimed as inherited property by the kin.

This, at all events, is exactly what did happen. We see it in a furious letter that the Venerable Bede wrote in the last year of his life, denouncing the proliferation of 'monasteries only in name': 'laymen under the pretext of founding monasteries buy lands on which they may more freely devote themselves to lust, and in addition cause them to be ascribed to them in hereditary right by royal edicts'; 'the very same men now are occupied with wives and the procreation of children, now rising from their beds perform with assiduous attention what should be done within the precincts of monasteries (a very ugly and unheard-of spectacle).'[10] Bede's language is of course highly coloured, but it is significant that he already describes grants by 'royal edicts' (charters) as 'hereditary right'. A more dispassionate impression of the same process comes from eighth- and ninth-century charters which record the descent of churches within families, or even stipulate that this should be so.[11] Late in Alfred's reign, a nobleman successfully sued a member of the church of Worcester for possession of land that a charter of his relative, King Coenwulf, had ordered to be restricted to his kin; and Alfred himself issued a law allowing kins to make such dispositions.[12] Words meaning 'heritance' were by now habitually used as the Westbury documents use them: for property obtained by book, hence not in theory heritable by customary norms.[13] In short, what had originally been meant to create Church property which was free from the claims of kindred came increasingly to mean property in which the kin had a legitimate interest.

The complexities of this subject readily explain why historians have disputed it so bitterly. They also explain why there were a whole number of later eighth- and ninth-century disputes over the disposition of bookland, and why Æthelric's inheritance gave rise to one of them. Deerhurst itself was presumably the family monastery *par excellence*, if Æthelmund was buried there and Æthelric expected to be. It does correspondingly well under the terms of his will. Westbury was a lavishly endowed minster which Æthelric might have hoped to keep in his family, but which it was prudent to promise to Worcester in return for its protection of his mother's short-term tenure. Ceolburh herself died in 807 as an abbess, of Berkeley itself according to a later Worcester source.[14] Berkeley may therefore have been *her* family monastery, and have expected to lay hands on Westbury because Æthelric or Æthelmund had already put her in possession of it: they could not – or would

not – distinguish between '*hereditas*' that was actually vested in a charter, so freely disposable, and genuinely inherited family property that was subject to their claims. Putting it another way, Æthelric claimed freedom of disposition, and proceeded to use it in his mother's interest. It is hardly surprising that the 'Berkeley people' were confused.[15]

It is an unedifying as well as complex story. But there is, as I say, more to it than a conflict between worldliness and reform. The bishop's case was nothing like so 'open and shut' as it seems to our principled eyes. At much the same time as Æthelric's family was establishing its ecclesiastical empire, papal charters were allowing Mercian kings to exercise patronage over their family monasteries. When Bishop Heahberht's great contemporary, Archbishop Wulfred, challenged King Coenwulf about the abbeys ruled by his daughter, he may have found the pope against him, and his victory was both long-delayed and Pyrrhic.[16] Even the formidable Carolingian episcopate was humiliated when it tried to put reforming principles into practice. My tentative suggestion in the present context is that the bishop of Worcester had to pay for his eventual success at Westbury by giving up hope of doing anything about Deerhurst itself, the house where Æthelmund lay buried and which, if it was indeed the principal family monastery, must have mattered most to Æthelric. Kindred claims had deep roots in the psychology of the early medieval western nobility. It would take several centuries of reform to pull them up. A last point is one I have made before, but it will bear repetition in this of all settings. Historians who bemoan the decline of Bede's Church into worldly values need to appreciate that it is inseparable from much of what they admire. What we look at in this Church comes from the wealth and love of lavish display of a powerful local family; that is to say, we owe it to two of the values of an aristocracy, for whom the integrity of family property was a third. The world of fallen humanity is not so full of rich young men like Bede's Benedict Biscop, ready to give away their wealth so as to receive a hundredfold from Christ, that we can reasonably expect to have the artistic patronage without the rest of the value system that made it possible.

So the first thing I wish to register is that we owe our earliest and crucial glimpse of Deerhurst to a prolonged wrangle between the family of the lay patrons responsible for the splendour we see around us and the reforming (if itself not entirely disinterested) zeal of bishops determined to rein in such claims. Specifically, we owe it to the excellence of the archives kept at Worcester from the late seventh century, and carefully transcribed in what is by far the earliest English cartulary. The only remote parallel is Canterbury Cathedral itself, which managed to pass on a large number of documents in their original form, though only from 798.[17] This is no doubt why Kentish churches are the only ones that feature as prominently as Deerhurst in the documentary records. It is pertinent to note that at least one of these gave rise to the same conflict of Church authorities and secular patrons as Westbury, and at the same time.[18] There must have been many more such churches, and may have been many more such conflicts.

We may now pass on to Deerhurst's equally brief appearance in tenth-century history. Osbern, precentor of Canterbury, wrote a *Life of St Ælfheah*, the archbishop who was killed in 1012 by Danes who had just looted a wine-ship, after he had refused to burden his flock any further with their demands for tribute (he would presumably have taken a rueful view of Kipling's much-quoted observation that 'once you have paid the Danegeld / you will never get rid of the Dane').[19] Osbern says that Ælfheah began his monastic experience in a 'monastery called Deerhurst; and, inasmuch as the place was sparsely inhabited, virtue made those who did live there most admirable'. What follows is an equally over-written and imprecise account of how Ælfheah cultivated the monastic virtues; until he 'seized the path of a stricter life, and entered single combat with the malign enemy' as a hermit at Bath, where he soon gathered a following and established a monastery. This story raises more problems than orthodox historiography is ready to admit. Nothing is said of Dunstan (otherwise Osbern's special hero), who is usually credited with the re-establishment of Bath.[20] Nor is any mention made of Oswald, who is customarily found at the top of the monastic 'family tree' in which Deerhurst stands. There is in fact no evidence that Oswald had anything at all to do with Deerhurst; Dom David Knowles' only reason for including it among his refoundations was that he could thus make up the total of seven claimed by Oswald's biographer, Byrhtferth.[21] But seven is a suspiciously mystical number, and Byrhtferth was much given to such casts of mind.[22] If there is no reason to think that Deerhurst was ever part of Oswald's connection, then there is no reason either to include it among the targets of the notorious Ealdorman Ælfhere's 'anti-monastic reaction'.[23]

We need not disbelieve Osbern's story entirely. It is supported by William of Malmesbury and by the *Chronicle* of John of Worcester (which, hard as they try, historians seem to be unable to get out of the habit of attributing to 'Florence').[24] But it is still the case that Osbern's account of Ælfheah at Deerhurst leaves almost no cliché of monastic hagiography undeployed. He was writing his *Life* to answer the vigorously expressed doubts of Archbishop Lanfranc about his predecessor's claim to martyrdom (Lanfranc was no doubt sensitive about those who achieved martyrdom by resisting foreign invaders).[25] The signs are that he knew no more of Ælfheah's earlier life than a pair of place-names. There seem to be two possibilities. The Deerhurst joined by Ælfheah could have been a community of dedicated reformers who had established themselves independently of any great patron, as regularly happened on the continent (where scholars have now learned to be chary of 'family trees').[26] It may then have simply subsided into comfortable 'normalcy' after the first enthusiastic generation, with no need for anti-monastic reactions. Alternatively, it might not in fact have been a reformed community at all, but the sort of secular college that it had presumably been since the ninth century and would again be in the eleventh. Ælfheah would then have been individually called to reform from a conventional background; and if Deerhurst were never reformed, it need never have been attacked. In any event, Ælfheah's residence at Deerhurst seems secure. So it is

that a post-Conquest controversy about an individual's status as a martyr provides our one link between the ninth century and the eleventh.

It remains to consider the entries relating to Deerhurst in the later part of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, and in the closely related *Chronicle* of John of Worcester. These entries are just three: first, for the year 1016, the text of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* known as 'D', which was written in the latter decades of the eleventh century and breaks off in 1079, informs us that Olney, site of the treaty between Cnut and Edmund Ironside that concluded the hostilities of that gruelling year, was 'near Deerhurst': while John says that the two kings first met at Deerhurst, Edmund on the west bank of the Severn and Cnut on the east, before proceeding to negotiations at Olney, an island in the river itself. The second is for the year 1053: again, it is the 'D' manuscript of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* which records the death at Deerhurst of Ælfric, brother of Odda, followed by his burial at Pershore; and this time John of Worcester merely supplies a calendar date for his death. Finally, the 'C' as well as the 'D' *Chronicle* versions enter the death on 31st August 1056 of Earl Odda (evidently the aforementioned brother of Ælfric), both saying that he became a monk before he died and that he too was buried at Pershore; but 'D' alone adds a tribute to his pure and noble character; and John records that he died at Deerhurst, and that Bishop Ealdred of Worcester had admitted him to monastic status.[27] This is admittedly not much. But it is more, I repeat, than we have for all but a very select few of the pre-Conquest churches whose fabric still substantially survives. Of particular interest is that some of it reads very like local colour. So can it be said that these entries exist because they were, in some sense, of local concern?

This question, unfortunately, launches us onto the quagmire of *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* scholarship. Although the *Chronicle* is axiomatically the most important source for English history from 731 to the twelfth century (E. A. Freeman, the erratic Victorian polymath, thought that it belonged on all true-born Englishmen's bedside tables, along with the Bible and Shakespeare), it is astonishingly difficult to find any consensus on where or when any one part of any one text was written, or on how the relationship of the different versions may be explained. In any *Chronicle* study of less than monograph length, argument has to make way for hypothesis, where W's deduction is X's hunch, and Y's rigour is Z's abuse of Occam's razor. Yet *Chronicle* forays can have something of the charm of an explorer's tale. And the expedition I wish to launch here may cast further light on a figure who was of considerable importance in the history of mid-eleventh-century England generally and of Deerhurst specifically. In embarking on it, I shall move with all due deliberation, sticking to what little common ground there is, though with a wary eye for its erosion by modern research.[28]

The temptation to speak of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in the singular is like Original Sin: irresistible, redeemable, but for all that quite wrong. There was, to be sure, a core text common to all versions, which was evidently put together in 891/2

at or in the neighbourhood of King Alfred's court. But, as they stand, the seven and a bit *Chronicle* manuscripts should be regarded as so many distinct *Chronicles*. The next point to appreciate is that three of these, the versions known as 'E' and 'F' as well as 'D' itself, are conflations of two or more earlier versions, put together after 1066 when there was a premium on the recovery of a vanishing Anglo-Saxon past. The Latin *Chronicle* of John of Worcester is another text of this type. Since these chronicles represent editorial efforts, they also reflect an element of editorial choice, which makes it difficult to draw any very clear conclusions about the identity or localization of their authors. It is misleading to argue from entries relating to particular places or areas, because these could have been selected from *one* of that chronicle's *sources*. It is even less justifiable to exclude a possible provenance on the basis that a text omits items that we would then expect to find; they may have been editorially omitted for reasons that we are in no position to know. We have to look not at the details but at the overall shape of a *Chronicle* text, to study the macrocosmic rather than the microcosmic patterns.

A first point at least is quite clear. John of Worcester's *Chronicle* was certainly written at Worcester in the 1120s and 1130s. The characteristic hand of what is evidently an autograph manuscript occurs throughout a number of books of definite or probable Worcester origin. To that extent, my main question is already answered. If 'D' did not survive, John would still supply us with all we know about eleventh-century Deerhurst. But this would still leave us with the question of his sources. Because we do have the 'D' *Chronicle*, we can say that one of them was either 'D' itself, or something very like it. It is on 'D', therefore, that the argument needs to focus.[29] The *prima facie* conclusion from its closeness to John is that 'D' too is from Worcester: the 'Worcester Chronicle' is what Freeman unhesitatingly called it. An important point in Worcester's favour is that it was certainly there in the sixteenth century, when Archbishop Parker's indefatigable secretary, John Joscelyn, also called it the 'Worcester Chronicle', and said that it was still in the church library. The case for Worcester was powerfully restated in 1940 by Sir Ivor Atkins in a paper which, as we shall see, came closer than anyone yet has to solving the problem.[30]

But the case for Worcester is not in fact secure. In the first place, it is not a conclusive argument that 'D' was there in the sixteenth century, or even in the twelfth. One of the things that is increasingly clear about twelfth-century Worcester is the special effort that it put into the reconstruction of the Anglo-Saxon past. One of its fruits was precisely John of Worcester's *Chronicle*. Such was its reputation for historical expertise that Eadmer, the Canterbury historian and biographer of Anselm, twice consulted Prior Nicholas of Worcester about historical issues. One of these was the rights of the metropolitan see of York in Scotland – about which one might have expected Eadmer to know enough already. But Nicholas was almost certainly the Englishman, Æthelred, who had been a special protégé of the sainted Bishop Wulfstan, and who therefore had links with the Old English past unmatched by any other leading churchmen of the early twelfth century.[31] It is thus not at all

unlikely that the 'D' *Chronicle* was among the materials assembled by Worcester's early twelfth-century specialists, but had not itself been written there. A second point that weighs very heavily against a Worcester origin for 'D', despite my warning of the pitfalls of arguments from omission, is that (unlike John) it says nothing about that see's great hero of the later eleventh century, St Wulfstan.

This point had already been registered by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*'s first real editor, Charles Plummer, who himself proposed nearby Evesham instead.[32] Atkins dealt conclusively with the Evesham hypothesis, but failed to account satisfactorily for Wulfstan's absence. This strategic error exposed the whole flank of his argument to the uniquely heavy artillery of Professor Dorothy Whitelock – or, more precisely, to the batteries of Sir Frank Stenton which she fired (as was her wont) on his behalf. What Stenton and Whitelock spotted about the 'D' *Chronicle* was its special interest in the affairs of the sainted Queen Margaret of Scotland, herself an English princess.[33] 'D', together with 'E', form what is called 'the northern recension' of the *Chronicle*. Three of its features are particularly important: it inserts into the core pre-892 text a number of items of northern interest, derived from Bede and from a set of eighth-century annals that very probably originated at York (they refer to York as 'ceaster, the city' without further specification); it includes an annal for 959 in the ubiquitous idiom of Archbishop Wulfstan of York (1002–23); and its 1065–79 annals (before 'D' breaks off) resume a distinctly northern orientation. 'D' has a more pronounced interest in Scotland than 'E', has a further Wulfstanian passage at 975 (though making no reference, unlike 'E', to Wulfstan's death), and gives more details about northern affairs 926–58, 1026–55, and again from 1065. The Stenton/Whitelock proposal is therefore that 'D' was a *Chronicle* made in the North, quite possibly for the Anglo-Scottish royal court.

Anglo-Saxon historians differ from Professor Whitelock at their peril, even when her guns have sadly fallen silent. But the 'northern case' as she deploys it is nonetheless vulnerable in its turn. The first objection (of which she was well aware) is that the Deerhurst entries are one of a series of what might be called 'Mercian' or 'West Midland' items in 'D's otherwise 'northern' sections: identification of Pucklechurch as the place where King Edmund was stabbed to death; a Worcester/Droitwich earthquake sensed as far away as Derby; display of the Welsh prince Rhys's head at Gloucester 'on the eve of Epiphany'.[34] Second, it has now been shown that Northumbrian annals in Latin which are related to the 'northern recension's' eighth-century additions were written in their extant form by Byrhtferth, the Ramsey monk who, as biographer of Oswald and Ecgwine, obviously had close West Midland contacts.[35] Access to 'northern' sources was therefore possible in a 'southern' context. The fact that the 'northern recension' of the *Chronicle* can call York simply 'the city' means merely that its source passed through a 'York phase', as is anyway intrinsically likely. Third and above all (and as Whitelock again stressed herself) it is a critical clue to the solution of this whole mystery that the sees of York and Worcester were combined for fifty years from Oswald's accession in 971

until Archbishop Wulfstan's death, again in 1040–1, and finally under Archbishop Ealdred in 1061–2 until an increasingly reform-minded papacy indignantly terminated this means of allaying official anxiety about the questionable loyalty and unquestionable poverty of the northern archbishopric. It follows that passages in Wulfstanian style are just as likely to have been included at Worcester as at York. It follows too that we can explain both the 'Worcester' features that underpinned Atkins' case and those that directed the Stenton/Whitelock gaze northward, without discarding the strengths of either hypothesis: Bishop Ealdred of Worcester, future archbishop of York, who on 12th April 1056 dedicated Odda's chapel at Deerhurst; and later that summer, also at Deerhurst, bestowed monastic orders on the dying earl.

I have said that *Chronicle* analysis may have more to learn from macrocosmic patterns than microcosmic details. Ealdred's prominence in the 'D' text is so macrocosmic that not much about it is not thereby explained. Take a very simple indicator first. One of the glories of Plummer's *Chronicle* edition is its 145-page index. On what is admittedly no more than an 'instant scan', Ealdred is found to occupy thirty-three lines of it, with twenty-six listed entries of which over half are in 'D' alone. This is more than any other non-royal individual bar three: Earl Godwine, who was the father of a future king, and whose prominence is swollen by the uniquely detailed records of the crisis surrounding his exile and return in 1051–2; Archbishop Dunstan, who has only fourteen entries, and whose forty-five lines owe more to Plummer's notes than to *Chronicle* texts; and Archbishop Lanfranc, the great bulk of whose entries derive from the Latin 'Acts of Lanfranc' added to a single manuscript at Canterbury. So mere statistics make a strong case for Ealdred, and especially in relation to the 'D' text.

Then, quite a number of 'D's special features make sense in terms of what Ealdred is known or likely to have done or thought. The obvious ones are its records, not in 'C' or 'E', of Ealdred's succession to the see of Worcester in 1046, his assumption of responsibility for the abbey of Winchcombe in 1053, the fact that, as diocesan, he nonetheless permitted the bishop of Lichfield to consecrate the church of Evesham in 1054 (when, as we shall see in a moment, he was on other business), his own consecration of Gloucester Abbey and pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1058 (making 'a worthy gift for our Lord's tomb of a golden chalice worth five marks, of very wonderful workmanship'), and his receipt of the archiepiscopal *pallium* from the Pope (without mention of his rebuff for pluralism) in 1061.[36] Another well-known characteristic of 'D' is its neutrality in the political struggles of the house of Godwine with its many enemies. It is thus interesting that 'D' should once more be alone in saying that Ealdred was instructed by the king to intercept Harold and his brother as they took flight in 1051, but 'could not – or would not'.[37] We can also note the special emphasis laid by 'D' on the promises of good government that Ealdred received from William the Conqueror before he crowned him on Christmas Day 1066. A story still treasured in York tradition centuries later

told how Ealdred obliged the king to punish an oppressive sheriff by robustly reminding him of his promises.[38] But perhaps the clinching consideration, and certainly the most interesting in its implications for the fraught politics of the period, is the very preoccupation of 'D' with Queen Margaret and her family that pointed Stenton and Whitelock towards the Scottish court. As 'D' alone tells us, Ealdred spent nearly a year in 1054–5 at Cologne 'on the king's business', and there is little doubt that the business in question was the recall of Edward 'the Exile', son of the Confessor's half-brother and Margaret's father. 'D' is again on its own in dwelling at length on Edward's return, origin and almost immediate lamentable death in 1057. Finally, and most suggestively, it is 'D' that says that Archbishop Ealdred and the citizens of London wanted to make Margaret's brother, Edgar Ætheling, king after Hastings 'as was his due'.[39] It is thus entirely to be expected that any associate of Ealdred's should retain the sort of interest in this family's Scottish experiences that is 'D's' hallmark.

An Ealdred hypothesis permits most of 'D's' problems to fall into place. A source associated with him would of course be interested both in York and Worcester down to 1062, but would from then abandon any concern with Worcester and its saintly bishop for the more radically northern bias that persisted after his death in 1069. Quite apart from his transfer to York, he and his Norman successor had a number of legal run-ins with St Wulfstan. If a certain coolness about him could be found anywhere in England, it would perhaps be at York.[40] Had Atkins given this solution more than a passing glance in a paper that otherwise said nearly all that I have, he would not have drawn Whitelock's fire, and might be considered to have solved the problem. His only substantial objection (other than 'D's' later Worcester provenance) was that the text makes a mistake in 1072 which should have been inconceivable for a member of the York clergy. But Ealdred was the patron and reformer of several northern churches, in any one of which a careless scribe could have misconstrued the text before him. And since it was from the West Midlands (particularly Evesham) that the North was recolonized for the monastic life in the decades after 1070, maintenance of the sort of contacts that would have enabled Worcester's specialists to set hands on 'D' in the first half of the twelfth century is not at all implausible.[41] So long as York itself is excluded, the case that 'D' was compiled in the North, and very largely from sources associated closely with Ealdred, appears to stand as steadily as any hypothesis can on such quaking terrain.[42]

This painstaking ramble through far from promising scenery is thus of interest to more than *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* aficionados. If the argument holds, the 'D' *Chronicle* is itself evidence of the political, administrative and ecclesiastical horizons of one of the key personalities in later Old English history, one who, as much as any other (and even if not for long), represented a bridge across the chasm of 1066. Among these horizons was Deerhurst. We need look no further for the reason why Deerhurst alone, of the Worcester diocese's many minsters, should appear in the

chronicles. It was important to those of Ealdred's entourage who followed him to York (whence 'D') or stayed at Worcester (whence John), because Ealdred and Odda were close. In this connection, I have a final suggestion that returns us neatly to where we were before. It will be recalled that Archbishop Wulfstan's death in 1023 is unexpectedly overlooked by 'D'. I did not then say what replaces it: an elaborate account of the translation of the martyred Archbishop Ælfheah. If Ælfheah's memory was in any way preserved at Deerhurst, as is not in the least unlikely, then it also makes sense that his interment as one of the English Church's greatest heroes should have seemed important in Ealdred's circle.[43] This in turn may be the reason why John chose to record Ælfheah's Deerhurst episode in his own *Chronicle*.

I have been arguing so far as if the existence of two magnificent Anglo-Saxon buildings at Deerhurst were what can be taken for granted, and the availability of any *historical* information about them were what needs explaining. I shall finish by reversing the argument. One reason, as is now generally agreed, why so much Anglo-Saxon building seems relatively unimpressive is that all the wealthier and more important buildings were comprehensively rebuilt when improved later medieval architectural technology made this possible. Those left more or less as they stood were the poorer and less important. Now, there are in fact many reasons for thinking that Deerhurst was anything but unimportant. Æthelmund was the man who ran the sub-kingdom of the Hwicce for King Offa after its 'native' dynasty disappeared. Odda was probably a kinsman of King Edward, was certainly one of his most prominent nobles and may possibly have himself held administrative responsibility for the West Midlands.[44] No church so favoured by such figures can have failed to matter. Nor was it impoverished. Deerhurst's Domesday assessment of 119 hides valued at £67 10*s*. is hugely greater than that of manors associated with almost any other pre-Conquest church whose fabric still substantially survives above ground. If it had retained this value, it would have eclipsed Sherborne Cathedral or Burton Abbey and ranked not far below Worcester itself.[45] So, instead of asking why Deerhurst gets fleetingly into the historical record, I ought probably to have asked why, alone among churches of comparable significance and wealth, it is still extant as a largely Anglo-Saxon building.

This introduces the last of the sources for Anglo-Saxon Deerhurst; and it nicely makes the point about precarious information, because it is lost. Edward the Confessor's writ granting half of Deerhurst to his cherished abbey of Westminster is extant, as is an associated boundary clause and a number of fraudulent texts confirming the bequest. But the writ that gave the other half *via* his personal doctor, Baldwin, to Baldwin's home abbey of Saint-Denis is known only from William the Conqueror's confirmation of 1069.[46] Now, the diversion of the estate must obviously have affected Deerhurst's fortunes, especially as Westminster got the more valuable part while Saint-Denis was lumbered with the church itself. All the same, Saint-Denis' manor was still worth £26 10*s*. That Deerhurst was not rebuilt may be as much because of a lack of interest as a lack of funds. The abbots of Saint-Denis

were among the most influential builders of the Middle Ages. Abbot Suger was pioneer and propagandist of the Gothic style.[47] But it was his own church that concerned him, not those of its overseas dependants. So long as the revenues flowed (and so long, no doubt, as the church still stood up) Deerhurst could be left as it was. Had it come into the hands of a great lay patron, it would surely have been magnificently rebuilt, as Robert Fitz Haimo rebuilt no less wealthy Tewkesbury nearby. In other words, the survival of what William of Malmesbury, in a characteristically graphic phrase, called 'this empty image of antiquity', to house a special lecture series may be the consequence of an absentee landlord's benign neglect.[48]

What I have been saying in this lecture could thus be summarized in the proposition that Deerhurst was important to important people in Anglo-Saxon times, but it was not of *front-rank* importance. That is precisely its value to a historian. Returning to what I said at the outset, our view of Anglo-Saxon history is dictated by a very few supremely articulate people. We are in danger of missing the rich variety of early English culture if our impressions of what happened and what mattered are merely those of the dominant sources. Bede's dens of vice were the minsters which were what most people saw of the Church in action for centuries. More was happening in the tenth-century Church than the Tenth-Century Reformation. Not everybody in the reign of Edward the Confessor was supporting the succession of one or other of the protagonists at Hastings. To lecture at Jarrow is to encounter an idealist's vision of history. To lecture at Deerhurst is to remember that there is more to history than ideals.

APPENDIX: Westbury and Stoke

My paper of 1986 (n. 5 below) argued the probability that two of the charters on which Worcester based its rights to the inheritance of Æthelric were forged or doctored in its interest, and that this was done by the church of Worcester in order to promote its suit at the synod of 824. My argument has been questioned (though not repudiated) by Patrick Sims-Williams, *Religion and Literature in Western England, 600–800* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 155 (n. 61), 176. The possibility that the bishop of Worcester had to resort to (doubtless pious) fraud in order to sustain a case against the family solidarities of lay patrons is germane to an understanding of how and why churches like Deerhurst came to exist. I therefore take this opportunity to give my reasons for still thinking that he did.

The charters in question are S 59, which appears to survive in an original form, and S 146, which is preserved in the early eleventh-century Worcester cartulary attributed to Hemming and also in another eleventh-century Worcester cartulary. S 59, dated 770, presents an adapted version of S 58, dated 767, in that five hides at Stoke Priors (Aston) which had been given to Æthelmund outright were now to be

possessed only in his lifetime and for that of two heirs, after which 'the land with the deeds is to be given back (*reddatur*) to the church of Worcester.' On the other hand, S 146 is an alternative version of S 139, in that the latter granted a fifty-five-hide estate at Westbury to Æthelmund, while the former gave sixty hides to Worcester (neither is dated, but both have the same dating range, 793–6).

It must be granted that the circumstances are indeed *prima facie* suspicious. Dr Sims-Williams, following a line of thought already advanced by Professor A. Bruckner, *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores* IV (Olten and Lausanne, 1967), no. 274, thinks it 'not impossible that S 59 is a revised copy, not necessarily forged, issued late in Offa's reign with the added consent of his heirs (as seen on the dorse), of a lost charter of 770'; and rather less tentatively that the Stoke referred to by Æthelric in his dispositions of 804 was Stoke Bishop, adjoining Westbury itself, in which case Stoke Priors would not be in dispute, and there would be no call for a doctored charter. These issues can be taken in reverse order.

(1)   There is no doubt that the Worcester cartularists came to identify the Stoke of Æthelric's documents (S 1187) with Stoke Bishop. Part I of Hemming's cartulary (ed. T. Hearne, *Hemingi Chartularium Ecclesiae Wigorniensis*, Oxford, 1723, pp. 101–6) sandwiches Æthelric's statement between S 146, Worcester's Westbury grant, and the charter of 883 that granted it Stoke Bishop (S 218), and supplies a linking rubric *'Carta Æthelrici de Westburh 7 Stoc'*. A list in the other eleventh-century cartulary seems to regard Westbury and Stoke as a single unit. But this cartulary is often slapdash, and even Hemming Part I may simply have been misled by the proximity of Westbury and Stoke Bishop into falsely identifying the Stoke to which Æthelric refers. Dr Sims-Williams notes that the forty-three hides allocated to Westbury in the version of Æthelric's will given by Hemming Part II combines with the twelve hides of Stoke Bishop to make up the fifty-five at which Westbury was assessed in S 139. But it seems clear that forty-three is the hidage of *Westbury and Stoke together*: *'terram xliii manentium æt Westmynster et ad Stoce'* (Hemming, *Chartularium*, p. 448) corresponds precisely to *'terram illam æt Westmynster 7 æt Stoce'* in Part I (ibid., p. 472), which Dr Sims-Williams takes to denote their unity. There is in fact no other basis for thinking that Westbury was ever assessed at forty-three hides: it has fifty in Domesday. The Hemming Part II figure seems likely to derive from a muddled cartularist's *subtraction* of Stoke Bishop's twelve hides from the fifty-five of S 139. Besides, the words *'terram illam æt Westmynster 7 æt Stoce'* need no more indicate *contiguous* areas than *'xi manentium Bremesgrefen 7 Feccanhom'* (i.e. Bromsgrove and Feckenham) earlier in the text. If they did betoken a unit, this could have been a 'discrete' estate of Westbury and Stoke *Priors* (five hides); that would explain how the fifty-five hides of S 139 became sixty in S 146, which would in turn explain why no Stoke is mentioned in S 1433 (824). Other points are that S 218 (883), in transferring Stoke Bishop from Berkeley to Worcester,

gives no hint that it had once been disputed between them, or indeed that Worcester had any prior claim on it at all; and that even if Westbury and Stoke (Bishop) *had* formed an ancient unit (as argued, on the basis of a somewhat indiscriminate use of charter and Domesday evidence by C. S. Taylor in a paper on 'The Pre-Domesday Hide of Gloucestershire', *Trans. Bristol & Gloucs. Arch. Soc.* XVIII (1893–4), pp. 288–319, to which Dr Sims-Williams refers) it by no means follows that it had all been granted to Æthelmund, or was all at his son's disposal in 804.

(2) Even if Stoke in S 1187 *were* Stoke Bishop, the evident sensitivity of the 'inheritance of Æthelric' might still have prompted Worcester to adjust Æthelmund's Stoke Priors charter. S 59 remains suspect in itself on two grounds. First, the witnessing of the 'heirs' on its dorse can certainly not have coincided with that of the others on its face: Queen Cynethryth and Prince Ecgfrith do not otherwise witness reliable charters until 779 (S 114) and 785 (S 123) respectively, and Princess Ælfflæd recurs only in S 127 (787), whereas Eata and Eadbald do not appear in acceptable texts after 775 (SS 63, 1411). Unless the attestations of the royal family are in a different ink (as cannot be proved under present conditions, and is not claimed by any authority), S 59 must be either an accurate copy of a conflated text or a bogus conflation of lists from the 760s and 780s. Confirmation by a queen and children alone is otherwise unparalleled, so the latter possibility seems likelier. Second, there is '*reddatur*'. Terminology should perhaps not be pressed too far. But elsewhere the word is used in leases or with a general sense of exchange or reversion: (following chronological order and ignoring spuriously early or otherwise irrelevant texts) S 1254, 109, 1255, 62, 1430, 149, 155, 1258, 1613, 1431, 1264, 1262, 1434, 1436, 1414, 281, 192, as well as S 1187, 1433; of service due etc. in BCS 310, S 180, 186, 1414; and on innumerable occasions of account rendered (or reward received) at Judgement Day. It seems to mean no more than 'hand over' (as in a hypothetically authentic S 59) in S 1429, 108(?), 1257(?), 185, 1436(?), 1414; but there is often a sense of reversion even here, and a noteworthy proportion of these texts are dispute records. It seems to have been a word that occurred to earlier charter draftsmen when thinking of what was *due* to them. But why should what had been given to Æthelmund have become 'due' to Worcester? As for the change of date from S 58's 767 to S 59's 770: the Worcester community *knew* from S 1187 that Æthelric had deposited copies of his dispositions with his 'friends'. They faced the risk that these would have extended to a copy of S 58. Hence, they *had* to produce a version of the text whose import was that the 767 arrangements had been superseded shortly afterwards.

S 146 is another matter. In 1986, I thought that it may not have been forged before the eleventh century; but there is reason to think that it too was a product of

the early ninth-century crisis. Its witness-list is right for late in Offa's reign, but with the crucial reservation that Archbishop Hygeberht, Offa's controversial new metropolitan of Lichfield, is missing, though the other archbishop and two other Mercian bishops are present. It may not be coincidence that the only other case of his absence since 781, even in his more episcopal days, is S 132, a Canterbury forgery (cf. Brooks, *Canterbury* (as n. 16 below), pp. 119, 350 (n. 36)). To omit Hygeberht need not have occurred to a forger of the eleventh century, when the whole saga must have been long forgotten everywhere except Canterbury. But in the fraught circumstances of the 820s, it might very well strike a wise Worcester scribe that Hygeberht's presence would risk the support of a still sensitive Canterbury. If, however, S 146 is a forgery of the same date as S 59, why is it so different? A not unreasonable guess is that Worcester did not then have the text of S 139, as they already did that of S 58, and so had no opportunity to adjust the disposition of an extant charter. They therefore had to create a rival text on the basis of some other exemplar, and hope that their credit outweighed their opponents'.

Professor Brooks has conclusively shown that Archbishop Wulfred did employ forgery in pursuit of a case over the Kentish minsters that precisely coincided with the Westbury dispute (below, n. 16). There is not enough evidence of the right type to make as strong a case that Worcester forged its Westbury and Stoke deeds. Yet if this is what Canterbury did, it is at least not inconceivable, and is perhaps not unlikely, that Worcester pursued the same objective by the same means.

NOTES

1 J. Campbell (ed.), *The Anglo-Saxons* (2nd edn, London, 1991), p. 246. I wish to thank Mr Arnold Porter and the Friends of Deerhurst Church for the invitation to collect and publish these miscellaneous reflections on the history of the absorbingly interesting building they have in their care. I am also grateful to John Blair, Michael Hare, Simon Keynes, Veronica Ortenberg and (of course) Jenny Wormald for constructive criticisms and helpful suggestions as my thoughts took what shape they have.

2 The 'Complete List of Churches' in H. M. (and A. J.) Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture* (3 vols, Cambridge, 1965, 1978), III, pp. 767–72, numbers 267, their 'Appendix F' (pp. 1071–7) adding twelve more; but seventeen are little more than archaeologically exposed foundations (pp. 738, 741–6, 751–5). For two expert modern views that would both prune and expand their corpus on general or specific grounds, see R. Gem, 'The English Parish Church in the 11th and Early 12th Centuries: A Great Rebuilding?', and T. Tatton-Brown, 'The Churches of Canterbury Diocese in the 11th Century', in J. Blair (ed.), *Minsters and Parish Churches: The Local Church in Transition, 950–1200* (Oxford University Committee for Archaeology 17, 1988), pp. 21–30, 105–18. A review of the Taylors' work also noting the dissonance of historical and architectural records is S. Keynes (with M. and B. K. Biddle, R. Cramp, M. Gatch), 'Anglo-Saxon Architecture and Anglo-Saxon Studies: a review', *Anglo-Saxon England* 14 (1985), pp. 293–317, at pp. 293–302.

3   The Taylors give references to Bede for Bradwell, Breedon (not in their 'Complete List'), St Martin's Canterbury, Hackness and Hart, as well as Bosham where the church is not of the Bedan period; to Durham sources for Billingham, Bywell, Corbridge, Seaham, Sockburn, Staindrop and ? Whittingham; to William of Malmesbury for Bradford, Gloucester and Wareham; to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for Reculver, Repton and Wimborne; to St Albans' *Gesta Abbatum* for two local churches; and to Felix's *Life of Guthlac*, Goscelin, John of Worcester, Hugh Candidus, *Liber Eliensis* and a York Chronicle for Repton, Much Wenlock, Repton again, Hadstock, Brixworth and Stow respectively. For narratives on Dover and Minster-Sheppey, see D. Rollason, *The Mildrith Legend: A Study in Early Medieval Hagiography in England* (Leicester, 1982).

4   References are to P. H. Sawyer, (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography* (Royal Historical Society, 1968) [S]: Bakewell (not in the 'Complete List'), S 548; Bibury, S 1254; Breedon, S 72; Dover, S 22, 1400, 1439, 1461; Minster-Sheppey, S 22; Much Wenlock, S 1254; Reculver, S 8, 22, 31, 38, 546, 1390, 1436; Stow, S 1478; West Mersea, S 1483, 1486, 1494; White Notley, S 1522. Tatton-Brown, p. 110, gives reasons for including St Mary's Dover in this and the above list, but not the well-documented Lyminge churches.

5   S 1187. I have already discussed this case in detail in W. Davies and P. Fouracre (eds), *The Settlement of Disputes in Early Medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 152–7; and see also the Appendix above, pp. 241–4.

6   S 1433.

7   S 139/146, 58/59; see further Appendix above.

8   I have given a review of the high points of the controversy, and made a first attempt at a fresh approach to it, in *Bede and the Conversion of England: the Charter Evidence* (Jarrow Lecture, 1984), pp. 19–23 (chapter 4 in this volume). [In addition, see now P. Wormald, 'On þa Wæpnedhealfe: Kingship and Royal Property from Æthelwulf to Edward the Elder', in *Edward the Elder, 899–924*, ed. N. J. Higham and D. H. Hill (London, 2000), pp. 264–79].

9   For a brilliant account of how the foundation of nunneries was promoted by the property strategies of an early Germanic aristocracy, see K. J. Leyser, *Rule and Conflict in an Early Medieval Society: Ottonian Saxony* (2nd edn, Oxford, 1989), pp. 49–73.

10   Ep. Ecgb. 12, pp. 415–16; trans. *EHD* I, pp. 805–6.

11   For one example, see Campbell, *Anglo-Saxons*, p. 123.

12   S 1442; Laws of Alfred 41, trans. *EHD* I, p. 415.

13   E.g. S 1500, 1510.

14   *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*: 807, ed. and trans. D. Whitelock et al. (London, 1961), p. 39. This volume, compounded of the versions in *EHD*, vols I and II, is the most convenient means of access to the *Chronicle*, and references are henceforth taken from it.

15   Michael Hare has kindly drawn my attention to evidence that there were early houses of both men and women at Berkeley, and suggests that 'tensions between the two communities' may explain the Berkeley claim.

16   Wulfred's campaign, indeed the whole issue of minster reform, has been illuminated as never before by Nicholas Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury* (Leicester, 1984), pp. 175–206.

17   Brooks, *Canterbury*, pp. 167–8.

18   S 1434, 1436, 1439; Brooks, *Canterbury*, pp. 183–6.

19   Osbern's *Life* is available only in the edition of H. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra* (2 vols, London, 1691), II, pp. 122–48 (here at pp. 123–4).

20   But Dunstan's patronage of Ælfheah might explain why he was later claimed as a product of Glastonbury: Brooks, *Canterbury*, p. 279.

21   D. Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England* (2nd edn, Cambridge, 1961), pp. 52, 721.

22   M. Lapidge, 'Byhrtferth and the *Vita S. Ecgwini*', *Medieval Studies* XLI (1979), pp. 331–53, at pp. 339–40.

23   Cf. A. Williams, '*Princeps Merciorum gentis*: the family, career and connections of Ælfhere, ealdorman of Mercia', *Anglo-Saxon England* 10 (1981), pp. 143–72, at p. 167.

24   William of Malmesbury, *De Gestis Pontificum Anglorum*, ed. N. E. S. A. Hamilton (Rolls Series, 1870), p. 169; Florence of Worcester, *Chronicon*, ed. B. Thorpe (London, 1848), I, p. 147. See M. Brett, 'John of Worcester and his Contemporaries', *The Writing of History in the Middle Ages: Essays presented to R. W. Southern*, ed. R. H. C. Davis and J. M. Wallace-Hadrill (Oxford, 1981), pp. 104–26.

25   R. W. Southern, *Saint Anselm and his Biographer* (Cambridge, 1961), pp. 217, 249.

26   See the conspectus of modern continental views in P. Wormald, 'Æthelwold and his continental counterparts: contact, comparison, contrast', *Bishop Æthelwold: His Career and Influence*, ed. B. Yorke (Woodbridge, 1988), pp. 13–42, at pp. 21, 28–9 (pp. 175, 179–81 in this volume).

27   ASC 1016, 1053 'D', 1056 'C' 'D', pp. 96, 128, 132–3; Florence, *Chron.* 1016, 1053, 1056, I, pp. 178, 211, 215 (the latter two references are of course more likely to be to the '*regia aula*', of which 'Odda's chapel' was part, than to St Mary's church itself).

28   The essential introduction to *Chronicle* studies and problems is Whitelock's (as above, n. 14), revised and updated in *EHD* I, pp. 113–21.

29   I am grateful to Dr C. R. Hart for showing me a paper on 'The English Chronicles from 1018 to 1042', arguing that 'D' used a lost set of Latin Worcester annals better represented by John's text; see his 'The Early Sections of the Worcester Chronicle', *Jnl. Med. Hist.* 9 (1983), pp. 251–315. Since our arguments come to much the same thing, it seemed best to leave mine more or less as they originally stood.

30   I. Atkins, 'The origin of the later part of the Saxon Chronicle known as D', *EHR* LV (1940), pp. 8–26.

31   William of Malmesbury, *Vita Wulfstani*, ed. R. R. Darlington (Camden Society 3rd series XL, 1928), pp. 56–7, with p. xxxviii, n. 2. I owe this point to Dr Ortenberg.

32   C. Plummer (ed.), *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel* (2 vols, Oxford, 1892–9), II, pp. lxxv–lxxvii.

33   Whitelock (as n. 28); see also D. Whitelock (ed.), *The Peterborough Chronicle* (EEMSF IV, Copenhagen, 1954), pp. 28–9.

34   *ASC* 946, 1048, 1053, pp. 72, 111,127. Cf. (e.g.) 940, 1033, 1044, 1049, 1052, 1063, pp. 70, 102, 108, 114, 122, 136 (and below, n. 36).

35   M. Lapidge, 'Byrhtferth of Ramsey and the early sections of the *Historia Regum* attributed to Symeon of Durham', *Anglo-Saxon England* 10 (1982), pp. 97–122 simultaneously with C. R. Hart, 'Byrhtferth's Northumbrian Chronicle', *EHR*. XCVII (1982), pp. 558–82.

36   *ASC* 1046, 1053, 1054, 1058, 1061, pp. 109, 128–9, 134–5; cf. 1049, p. 114 (Ealdred let down by lack of support in his efforts to repel Irish raiders). For an arresting suggestion about Ealdred's consecration of Gloucester, see Michael Hare's 1992 Deerhurst Lecture, *The Two Anglo-Saxon Minsters of Gloucester* (1993), pp. 17–26.

37   *ASC* 1051, p. 120.

38   *ASC* 1066, p. 145; *Chronica Pontificum Ecclesiae Eboracensis*, ed. J. Raine, in *Historians of the Church of York and its Archbishops* (3 vols, Rolls Series, 1879–86), II, pp. 350–3.

39   *ASC* 1054, 1057, 1066, pp. 129, 133, 143. For one important outcome of Ealdred's Cologne visit, see M. Lapidge, 'The Origin of CCCC 163', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* VIII (1982), pp. 18–28; and J. L. Nelson, 'The Rites of the Conqueror', *Proceedings of the Fourth Battle Conference on Anglo-Norman Studies*, ed. R. A. Brown (Woodbridge, 1982), pp. 117–32, reprinted in her *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London, 1986), pp. 389–99.

40   R. C. van Caenegem, ed. and trans., *English Lawsuits from William I to Richard I* (2 vols, Selden Society 106–7, 1990–1), I, pp. 3–6. Cf. M. Richter, *Canterbury Professions* (Canterbury & York Society LXVII, 1972), p. 26.

41   See Knowles, *Monastic Order* (as n. 21), pp. 166–70; it may not be irrelevant that Turgot, almost certainly the biographer of St Margaret, was an early associate of Aldwin, the West Midlander who led the northern revival.

42   Though I have tried to avoid the more Gordian of *Chronicle* knots in my text, evaded issues make for long footnotes, and it is necessary to take some account of the most strongly argued of the alternatives to an 'Ealdred' provenance for the 'D' text, namely Canterbury. The arguments in its favour are of two types. First, there are entries of apparently Canterbury interest 1019–23 (Dr M. K. Lawson's important new book, *Cnut* (London, 1993), pp. 52–5); since the hand that wrote 'D's annals 1016–51 was apparently the same as that of its concluding section 1071–9 (N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, Oxford, 1957, p. 254), a possible implication is that the text was finished at Canterbury. Arguments of this type are, however, open to objections on the point of principle put earlier in my text: only when microcosmic details merge to form a macrocosmic pattern, as they do in Ealdred's case, do they begin to argue for the provenance of a whole text rather than that of one of its many possible sources. Most of the 1019–23 entries relate somehow or other to the archbishopric; that the new archbishop was consecrated by Wulfstan and accompanied on his journey to receive the pallium by Abbot Leofwine of Ely are merely two of numerous ways in which news of the metropolitan see might achieve wider circulation (see also n. 43). The second approach argues from relationships between extant texts, and has recently been expounded with characteristically awesome learning by Dr David Dumville, 'Some Aspects of Annalistic Writing at Canterbury in the Eleventh and Early Twelfth Centuries', *Peritia* 2 (1983), pp. 23–57, especially at pp. 31–8, 53. The argument here (to summarize and over-simplify) is that the 'E' version of the *Chronicle* depends on a Canterbury (and probably St Augustine's) source until at least the early 1060s, and that

'D' and 'E' are close in their (largely northern) orientation 1065–76. But it remains unclear why it is necessary to believe as he does that 'D' must have drawn on 'E's' source. 'D' in its present form is, as has been said, a conflation, and one to which 'C' or its *doppelgänger* has made a significant contribution. But there is no such relationship between 'D' and 'E' for the forty years before 1065, in which period 'D' has much of its own to offer (nn. 34, 36–7, 39 above); a vignette of their differences is at 1049, p. 115, where 'D' denies knowledge of 'what bishops…and in particular what abbots' attended the Council in Rheims, but identifies the abbeys of two as St Augustine's and Ramsey; while 'E' names a bishop and two abbots but only one abbey! Further, 'E' is itself a conflation, and one with no distinctively Canterbury elements after 1063. So there seems to be no reason in principle why the conflationary mix available to its Peterborough compiler in 1121 should not have included both a Canterbury text (with 'northern recension' features down to 975 already built in) and later eleventh-century northern annals close to, but not identical with, those of 'D'. In other words, 'E' could just as well be considered indebted to northern annals shared by 'D' as 'D' to have exploited northern material made available at Canterbury by 'E's source.

43 *ASC* 1023, pp. 99–100. On the other hand, Archbishop Wulfstan's property deals had made his memory less than evergreen at Worcester: D. Whitelock (ed.), *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* (3rd edn, London, 1963), pp. 8–9.

44 See *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, ed. and trans. A. J. Robertson (2nd edn, Cambridge, 1956), pp. 456–8.

45 *Domesday Book*, ed. A. Farley (London, 1783), f. 166b (*Domesday Book Gloucestershire*, ed. and trans. J. S. Moore, (Chichester, 1982), 19:1–2, 20); cf. Knowles, *Monastic Order* (as n. 21), pp. 702–3.

46 S 1143, 1146; S 1551; S 1043, 1046. *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, vol. I, ed. H. W. C. Davis (Oxford, 1912), no. 32.

47 See the brilliant edition and translation of E. Panofsky, *Abbot Suger on the Abbey-Church of St-Denis* (2nd edn, Princeton, NJ, 1979).

48 *Gesta Pontificum* (as n. 24). Dr Blair helpfully points out to me that Wing and Wootton Wawen are also churches with significant pre-Conquest fabric which had alien lords after 1066; while Brixworth, and even Jarrow and Monkwearmouth, were dependencies of cathedrals. It can be added that the wealth of St Mary's Stow (above, p. 230 and n. 4) was eventually much reduced in favour of the new post-Conquest bishopric at Lincoln: Taylor and Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture* II, p. 585.

8

Corruption, Decline and the 'Real World' of the early English Church: Aristocrats as Abbots

It is customary to begin a lecture in the 'Ancient Church' series – and this is actually my third – by saying something about the church in question. There is a problem about that here. If my 'Deerhurst Lecture' was entitled 'How do we know so much about Anglo-Saxon Deerhurst?' an apt title for this one might be, 'Why do we know *as good as nothing* about early English Brixworth?' For this noble structure confronts historians of the pre-Conquest English with their standard challenge in its most acute form. I quote, as I did at Deerhurst, the lapidary words of the most imaginative living early English historian, Professor James Campbell: 'Our knowledge of so much hangs by so narrow a thread that it is as certain as certain can be that there was a great deal about Anglo-Saxon England about which we do not know, and never will know, anything.' And yet to come back to this place on a superb autumn afternoon, after nearly twenty years and one's own move from excitable youth to more contemplative middle age, is to be struck as never before by its simple magnificence. In its stark lines, its sober proportions, its sturdy eminence, above all its exquisite red-gold stone set into a purpling sky, it has the power to drive breath from one's body. There is nothing like it in these islands. I have seen nothing like it in Europe. It becomes easy to understand why so many scholars have been so sure that it must when first erected have been a place of the utmost significance, even if that *raison d'être* is now lost beyond recall. So, where the solution I offered to the riddle of our ignorance in Deerhurst's case was that it was only by the fluke of the absentee landlordship of the Abbey of St Denis (granted the church by Edward the Confessor) that a hitherto prosperous and important church was left in 'Anglo-Saxon' form at all, the answer to which I shall come hesitantly at the end of this lecture amounts to much the same. It is that Brixworth was a *success*; quite possibly *so* successful that it *had* to be forgotten.[1]

Early English history is a mint with a hole in it: we know a certain amount about its several fringes, depressingly little of its core, chronological or spatial. Thanks to

Bede and the early laws, we are better informed about the seventh century than any until the tenth or even eleventh. By then, the so-called (mis-called) '*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*' has come on stream, and from the mid-eleventh century is at last seriously helpful. That leaves a yawning gulf between 700 and 900, which from Bede's death to Alfred's accession becomes positively Stygian. Similarly, Bede tells us a lot about Northumbria, quite a bit about Kent, something even about East Anglia and Wessex, but very little about Mercia and the south-east Midlands, whose pagan and early Christian archaeological culture is richer than any bar Kent's. The '*Chronicle*', correspondingly, is relatively well-informed about Wessex, even early on, and sometimes about other areas south of the Thames, but is again almost a blank for the Midlands or the East, whereas bits and pieces do survive from the northern context.

I can best illustrate the serious implications of this double-bind for a Brixworth lecturer by a pair of observations on the historiography of early English art and architecture. One is that, until Richard Gem's seminal articles of 1986 and 1993, there was a nigh-irresistible temptation to date pre-Conquest churches to the earliest or latest phases of Old English history. As a consequence, Brixworth had to have been built in the seventh century and developed as part of the 'Tenth-Century Reformation' (another of our subject's misnomers). I wonder whether even Dr Gem would have dared to date it where it now so obviously belongs, in the later eighth/earlier ninth centuries, but for the survival in Worcester's exceptionally full archive of a charter indicating that Deerhurst was under significant aristocratic patronage at that time, and in all probability took most of its extant form about then.[2]

Similarly, it is because of the very special expertise of Dr Michelle Brown that we can now at least be comparatively sure that the illuminated devotional collection known as the *Book of Cerne* (yet another unhelpful label) was indeed produced somewhere in Mercia in the middle, perhaps the second quarter, of the ninth century. This had been quite generally believed since its publication in 1902, on the basis of a pair of references to a 'Bishop Aedeluald', identified with a bishop of Lichfield of that name, dated 818–30. What happened then was that an American professor, S. M. Kuhn, used the apparently 'Mercian' gloss in the famous *Vespasian Psalter* to argue that it, the *Book of Cerne*, and three other manuscripts, including a copy of Bede and a sumptuous if fragmentary bible, were fruits of what he conceived as a 'Mercian Renaissance'. This, however, brought him into confrontation with the great Kenneth Sisam, an experience from which only the yet greater J. R. R. Tolkien ever emerged in one piece.[3] Sisam had no difficulty in proving that anyway the Psalter and Bible were securely attributable to Canterbury, and as a result the whole basketful was hived off to the south-east; Vespasian's 'Mercian' gloss, if Mercian it was, could readily enough be explained in terms of the strongly Mercian presence at Canterbury in the eighth and early ninth century. Then David Dumville, following the lead of the immortal Wilhelm Levison, argued that the 'Æthelwald' in question was actually the homonymous bishop of Lindisfarne (721–40), and that the core of the collection is thus Hiberno-Northumbrian in origin.[4] Once again, the

pull of the North and the South-East was creating a knowledge vacuum in the middle. But Dr Brown's skilled analysis of script, decoration and content shows that the original assignation was probably right after all.[5] *Cerne* has very likely the same sort of date and cultural context as this great church. I shall have a bit more to say of the implications of this later on.

The best route (or at any rate the route I have always adopted) around the baffling silences of early medieval history ('Dark Ages' in that but *no* other respect, *pace* the BBC and sundry other modern *cliché*-traders), is to look at other better-documented parts of what we may reasonably think to have been materially and conceptually the same world. It's like walking down a street in a modern housing estate at twilight: one front room is sufficiently lit by a 60-watt bulb to make out the sofa, armchairs, coffee-table, TV/video and sound-system; so, though the next one along is in almost total darkness, you have a pretty good idea that there's a three-piece suite and a Sound–Vision 'combo' there too. In the eighth and ninth century, when this church would have assumed most of the dimensions and much of the appearance that it still has, the half-lit interior next door is the Carolingian empire, then reaching the apogee of its power and sophistication. But if we are fully to understand Brixworth as a historical problem, we must begin with yet wider angles, spatial and chrono-logical. We must think, like the Vatican, in a *longue durée* of centuries, even millennia.

Christianity as a way of life and belief began in the cities and small towns at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. This, it must be stressed, was about as different a world from that of those living here at that time, or for most of two millennia to come, as two parts of the same cosmos could easily be. Consider its technical vocabulary: the word 'bishop' is Greek (meaning 'overseer'), like 'priest' (a function shared with paganism, north or south). Greek too are 'deacon', 'acolyte', 'baptism', 'eucharist', indeed 'church' (which passed early into Germanic tongues from Greek 'κύριος, lord'. 'Parish', a particularly interesting case, appears to derive from 'παροικόμαι, to stay away/be a foreigner' (Christians ostensibly were 'aliens' in this vale of tears). A comparison of the location of the bishoprics of the early medieval West against a background of the distribution of ancient 'cities' shows a great deal of overlap; a similar pattern can be seen in the East, though there the cities and later dioceses are more thickly clustered than in the West. In the East the pattern is a lot more ancient. We have cities in profusion where there had been Phoenician or Greek colonizers long before the Roman legions arrived: the one in Africa, the other round the rest of the Mediterranean littoral though seldom more than 100 miles inland. Even they were debutants beside the towns of the Fertile Crescent: some twice as much older than Rome as was Rome than London.[6] That was where Christianity sprang up.

You often hear or read that the difference between ecclesiastical arrangements in what we might (with the uttermost political rectitude) call the 'Atlantic Archipelago' and everywhere else is that Britain and Ireland had no towns. That is not really the

point. The passing phase that was the Roman Empire in western history made towns where there had been 'tribes', calling them '*civitates*' too: they were in essence what eastern cities had been all along; places of residence and business, political as well as commercial, of entertainment as well as commerce, for an elite that drew most of its income from country estates. So, the distribution of bishoprics across the West really (if roughly) tells us where there had been tribal 'capitals' in the pre-Christian past. That is what explains the apparent distinctiveness of Ireland (to be seen by looking sideways – as one so often must with matters Irish...).[7] There, places with the name-element '*Domnach*, lordship' indicate 'church' and '*Donagh*-[*Domnach*-]*Mór*, great church', as revealed by earlier Patrician literature. Richard Sharpe's path-breaking suggestion is that they were Ireland's primary churches, in fact bishoprics; and that the reason why these disappeared as units of ecclesiastical organization is that, like the Irish tribal kingdoms to which they corresponded, they were tiny and poor, and thus no sort of vehicle for the episcopal dignity promoted by 'Gregorian' Reform.[8] There are quite a few such churches on the Irish scene, in places clustering quite thickly.

What this comes down to for understanding the early Christian Church in the West is two things. The first and more obvious is that Christianity was always going to have greater difficulty penetrating the countryside than in the far more densely populated 'civic' East, where it had acquired its uniquely effective organizational structure: in the West there were far fewer cities, covering far greater rural hinterlands. Second – more subtly but yet more importantly – the much more thoroughly rural base that the ruling class had in the West right through Roman times was accentuated by the collapse of the ancient civic paradigm. A western bishop was a great man, because the wealth both of his family background and of his see derived from huge landed estates. But by that same token he was set much further above and apart from his flock than the original eastern 'overseer': to oversee intensively was more than he was able, or even inclined, to do.

This in turn meant two things: again, one more obvious and the other arguably more significant. A rising proportion of the Church's wealth and priorities came to have a more visibly rural profile in the form of monasteries – so much so that in Ireland and, as John Blair is now showing, in England too, the monastery (Irish *mainistir*, English 'minster') became the focal point of many new towns (like Oxford).[9] If you wanted to live and think 'out of town' in the Old East, you had to hit a 'desert'; in England, you had only to find a spot off (but usually near) the main road, or, as it might more probably be, a river. As Christianity became more firmly established here and overseas, monasteries became ever more prominent. It is a highly significant fact that, once Bede had done his best for them, early English bishops become 'grey men', just as their estates – barring those of Canterbury and Winchester (each itself a monastery) – look paltry when set in Domesday Book alongside those of the greater abbeys. By contrast, as Dr Blair again shows, tales in increasingly legendary vein coagulated around the patron saints, founders or major

benefactors of minsters.[10] The same, as is more widely known, came to be true of Ireland, and, although continental bishoprics had a much broader and older base, in France and Germany too.

Second, such foundations could not be as easily separated as in principle they should have been from the property interests of their founding families. Another forthcoming book by Susan Wood, happily in tandem with Dr Blair's, is showing as never before in any language, how completely impregnated by concepts of what amounts to 'private property' European churches became in the late and post-Roman era.[11] This is the subject of an absolutely fundamental letter by Bede, writing in the last year of his life to his one-time pupil, Ecgberht, bishop of York. I shall not yet again quote it at length: its *gravamen* comes to this, that 'there are innumerable places . . . allowed the name of monasteries . . . but having nothing at all of a monastic way of life . . . many and large places of this kind . . . useful neither to God nor man, in that neither is a regular life kept there . . . nor are they owned by companions or servants of secular power, to defend our people from the barbarians.' Precious royal landed resources are being alienated not to warriors who should be earning them with their brawn and blood, but to those who turn them into pseudo-abbeys where they proceed to procreate and carry on generally in a secular manner. Bede characterizes this with heavy irony as a new form of 'hereditary right', meaning you'd almost think they could be inherited like any other family property.[12]

We can reasonably deduce that that is precisely why aristocrats were procuring them: thereby swelling their property holdings and providing for heirs who could be sure not further to attenuate family property, whether as younger brothers who might have sons of their own in due course, or as virgins or widows transferring lands to rival families in marriage settlement; with the additional bonus, by no means to be sneezed at, that tenants can spend time praying for a founder's fallen soul. We can in fact see this happening in early English charters, the phrase 'hereditary right' coming into actual use within two decades of Bede's letter, and family members succeed to the office of abbot and hence to the produce and revenues of the abbey; all this is not far if at all below the surface of the wording of the chapters.[13] It was what King Alfred must have had in mind when, in an otherwise puzzling phrase, he discusses loan of property 'to another man's monk without permission of the monk's lord'.[14] Monks in monastic theory should not have possessed property, loaned or otherwise, nor should they have any 'lord' below God. In Ireland and Francia by the ninth century, this position had resolved itself into one where the abbot – or, as the Irish actually called him, '*comharba* (*coarb*), heir' – of a supposedly monastic community remained a layman in lesser clerical orders at best.[15] We may plausibly assume the same to have applied in England by analogy, even if the terminology of our so very scanty sources does not allow us to be sure. But the process did not go unchallenged. Not long after Bede wrote, a yet more formidable figure, Boniface, archbishop of Mainz and English evangelist *par excellence*, wrote to Archbishop Cuthbert of Canterbury, denouncing 'any layman, be he

emperor or king, official or courtier, relying on secular force, (who) may wrest a monastery from the power of a bishop . . . and begin to rule there in an abbot's place, have monks under him and hold property bought by the blood of Christ'. The council that Cuthberht proceeded to hold at Clofesho ranged over the whole gamut of 'secular' abuses, from the singing of psalms in the 'tragic [i.e. heroic?] mode' to clerical costumes featuring not just the purple-fringed Roman senatorial toga but also the 'vermiform' [wormlike] designs typical of 'Germanic' art. Again, these canons inveigh against 'monasteries, if we may call them that, which through 'human greed, cannot be . . . changed to a Christian way of life, but have been held by presumptuous laymen'.[16]

Yet such is more likely than not to have been the background of the elaborately worked setting where you now sit. The obvious thing about Brixworth is its startling size compared to most extant early English churches (though not Deerhurst, built by a known aristocratic dynasty at much the same time); and thanks to David Parsons' remarkable petrological researches, we know that whoever built it had the clout to transport massive quantities of stonework all the way from ruined Roman Leicester.[17] That sort of clout could not be wielded in the Carolingian era without possessing substantial estates; and in doing so, you might, as Bede and Boniface complained, be an abbot only in name. Can we say any more about who that abbot may have been? Of course not. But before we go on to other considerations arising more directly from the building, we might like to recall the arguments presented in this church by Simon Keynes in 1993.[18] His point, if you recall, was that abbots from the Leicester diocese were exceptionally prominent among witnesses to charters issued by Mercian kings and councils of the southern English Church, 780–836: we can associate them with the diocese of Leicester because their names are adjacent to the Bishop of Leicester's name in the witness list of an 803 synodal record that is unprecedented in its detail. The same group of abbots show up in similar positions in other charters and council documents throughout the period. Brixworth is right in the diocese's middle (and built, remember, from arguably Leicester ruins), and there is a well-nigh irresistible (or I find irresistible) temptation to think that so magnificent a church must have been the home abbey of one of those abbots whose names are noted in our late eighth- and early ninth-century charter witness-lists but whose place of power is not recorded.

Professor Keynes also told you that other evidence allows us to identify one series of names in the charter lists as abbots of Peterborough: Botwine and Beonna (third and fifth in his list and who attest from 759–805/7); then Ceolred, 841–52.[19] We might reasonably think that if these three abbots of Peterborough turn up so regularly in the witness-lists of the charters, so might whoever in the set fills the gap for the major council sessions of 814, 816, 824–5 and 836. A number of other abbots whose names appear in charters from those years could fit that bill: namely, Cuthwulf, 814×25, or Wilheard, 814×17, followed by Wilferth, 824×25; or, as alternatives to Cuthwulf and Wilferth (or Cuthwulf and Wilheard), perhaps by

Beornhelm who attests in 823 and 836. However that may be, we should rule out any of them as candidates for the job of abbot of Brixworth. Of the four listed in 803 synodal proceedings as Leicester abbots, that leaves Alhmund, Forthred and Wigmund.[20] Abbot Alhmund we have reason to associate with the Buckingham area (and the very fine church at Wing); and, given the later burial of King *Wig*laf and his grandson *Wig*stan at Repton, it is tempting to register Abbot *Wig*mund with that royal abbey. That leaves us Abbot Forthred, whose *obit* is recorded by the '*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*' for 805, and so was clearly a person of some importance. As another option for the Brixworth job, we might consider Wihtred, absent from the 803 synodal list but extremely prominent in the witness-lists of charters written between 816 and 836.[21] The one other abbot of known provenance, and thus clearly excluded from our investigation, is Eanmund, who received an important charter in 848 as abbot of Breedon, Leicestershire (another church with major early English features).[22] The point I would anyway prefer you to take away from these speculations (which would surely outrage Professor Keynes) is that given Brixworth's magnificence, it is a fair enough bet that its lord appears somewhere in these lists. Or, given what I have already said about the possibilities of a lay abbacy, it may be that he appears as a *dux* with a name hinting at kinship to one of them; for example, perhaps Eanberht *dux* in the early ninth century (fl. 804–11) (conceivably a relative of King Offa, whose grandfather was called Eanwulf); or, as already implied, Wigberht, *dux* 789–99; Wicga, *dux* 789x805, and Wigheard, *dux* 799x816 (in succession perhaps to Wigberht?).[23] All of which shows that not every early English historian admits defeat as might be wiser when faced with such painfully inadequate evidence.

It is time to return to the wider Carolingian context where we are on surer ground. What above all arrests attention about this church, size apart, is its distinctive 'ring crypt', with its function to permit access to, or at least sight of, the relics beneath the high altar. Dr Parsons makes a very strong (being of speculative bent, I would say near-conclusive) case that the central relic here was one of Boniface; his 5th June feast-day – that of his 'martyrdom' in 754 (maybe for his Faith and certainly for his goods) in what is now Friesland – was that of a three-day fair for the village as early as the thirteenth century.[24] Since the monks of Fulda, where he was buried, were not very obliging about supplying his body parts to others, perhaps we should presuppose an item of his clothing or other object with which he had come in contact. I by no means discountenance that idea: it deserves emphasis that, while no cult of Boniface is known from pre-Conquest England, his feast appears as does no other in all liturgical calendars from the ninth to the eleventh century.[25] But I should in passing like to hoist the kite that the dedication to All Saints, first attested as late as the 1360s, was actually primary. The reason to think so is that the feast originated in Ireland, where it coincided, surely by design, with the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain; and it was introduced to Carolingian Europe after 800 by none other than the Englishman Alcuin.[26] Furthermore,

Dr Brown argues suggestively that the *Book of Cerne*, which you will recall she now securely attributes to ninth-century Mercia, was designed in part to promote the 'Communion of Saints', the notion celebrated by this great feast of the Church.[27] This does not exclude the presence of a Boniface relic if we suppose that it joined relics of other members of that 'Blest Communion, Fellowship divine'.

Be any of that as it may, this crypt, like those of Wing and Cirencester (the latter arguably contemporary with ours at Brixworth) may focus our attention for a minute or two on the cult of relics, whose importance for an early medieval western believer is hard to overstate. We are fortunate to have a sparkling account by Einhard, Charlemagne's biographer, of the expedition that he despatched to Rome to procure relics of martyrs for his own churches.[28] Einhard, it is pertinent to note, was of aristocratic birth, and though brought up in St Boniface's Fulda, remained a layman all his life, and wrote as 'secular' an account of his great patron as can in the circumstances be envisaged. In other words, he too was a 'lay abbot'; yet he signs charters and letters '*peccator*, sinner', and we have no reason whatsoever to query the sincerity of his piety.[29] Moreover, the churches he built to house and honour his relics still in part stand. Seligenstadt, the larger of the two, has been, as I like to put it, 'ba-wrecked', but superficially at least, resemblances to Brixworth are striking. He first intended his saints' relics for Steinbach, but they made clear their intention to move on (as only early medieval relics could) and so were housed eventually at Seligenstadt – where, to judge from its plan, he built something like a ring-crypt for them below the apse.[30]

The story he tells of the 'translation' of these relics, those of the alleged early Roman martyrs SS. Marcellinus and Peter, is nothing if not dramatic. His agent was his priest (and, in the end, successor), Ratleig; their Roman factor, with all the scruples of a car salesman, had the inappropriate name of Deusdona – 'God gives'. To give was something Deusdona was reluctant to do. He kept Ratleig and his companions waiting for days, and they almost gave up in disgust. But one of them had had a vision, when smitten by a fever (from which he was thereby cured), of a church where they would find what they wanted, so they hired another guide. St Tiburtius, whose church was the one designated in visionary delirium, had a marble coffin whose lid was too heavy to lift, but they struck luckier with St Marcellinus in the crypt downstairs, removed his body and carefully replaced the lid, lest anyone notice it had gone. Ratleig then had to badger Deusdona for St Peter too: 'it would almost', as he put it, 'be a crime for the body of the blessed martyr Peter, who had been his companion in death, and who for more than 500 years rested with him in the same sepulchre, to remain there after his mate had left.' In the end each corpse was safely packed up and smuggled across the Great St Bernard Pass.

But the dramas had only just begun. On inspecting his treasure Einhard observed that Marcellinus' relics were smaller than Peter's, and deduced, reasonably enough, that 'he had perhaps been of smaller stature'. But when discussing his acquisitions

with none other than Hilduin, abbot of St Denis and imperial arch-chaplain (together they were taking in the view from an Aachen palace window), he discovered his mistake. The toad Hilduin had had his own man in the party who on the journey back had found himself at one time the only guard on the relics still awake – others being unaccountably overcome by drink; his other story was that while the bodies were still in Rome, he had been able to remove a pint of ashes (I kid not). Either way, Hilduin had to give them back, though with a bad grace and not without extorting further payment from Einhard of 100 gold pieces. Happily and doubtless explicably to Einhard's mind, Hilduin was in disgrace at the time of writing. Securely established beneath Seligenstadt's altar, the saints' relics proceeded to work dozens of cures among long waiting-lists of the area's sick and disturbed. Their speciality was deaf mutes, whose usual experience as they approached the shrine or slept nearby was a karate chop in the neck from a stranger resembling one or other martyr; and having spouted blood from ear, nose and throat (not very surprising, really), then recovered speech to tell all about it.

The saints had yet more serious business. While Einhard was at court, Ratleig turned up with a small set of *capitula* (draft decrees) for presentation to the emperor: they had been dictated in a blind man's vision by Archangel Gabriel, thoughtfully disguising himself as St Marcellinus. On these, Einhard reports (in terms startlingly redolent of what he wrote about Charlemagne's law-giving), that the emperor read them through, 'but of the things he was ordered or urged to do by this small book he took the trouble to fulfil very few'. The archangelic approach having been thus frustrated, the spiritual powers tried (as it were) the opposite tack. A demon named Wigga (interestingly, meaning something like 'war-war') possessed a sixteen-year-old girl to say (not in the vernacular German that was all she knew but in Latin, naturally) that he had been sent by Satan from his post at Hell's gate to spread devastation and pestilence over the crops, vineyards and herds of the Franks, all of which the people thoroughly deserved, 'because of the various sins of those appointed over them . . . they love rewards not justice, they oppress the poor and refuse to hear the widows and orphans crying to them, and they render justice only to those who pay for it.' So Wigga goes on, sounding for all the world like a *Daily Mail* columnist. We may laugh. Indeed, by all means let us do so. I for one find it hard to believe that Einhard, who had not a word out of place in his *Life of Charlemagne*, did not intend to raise at least a smile in places: such a story-telling culture could hope to be amused as well as edified even by supernatural narrators.[31] But the actions, so to speak, of these relics also served a deeply serious purpose. They opened lines of contact with a supernatural that was under far less scientific restraint (and so was a far more immanent threat) than in our ordered lives. Properly handled by the right spiritual authorities, they could, as the great Peter Brown has taught us, defuse a society's individual and collective tensions.[32]

They did more. Such saints made a powerful ideological point about the redressing of the old world's balance by the opening up of a new. The new Prologue drafted

in the 760s for *Lex Salica*, no less, pointed out that the Franks had 'in war struck the harshness of Roman yoke off their necks, and after baptism . . . adorned with gold and precious stones the bodies of holy martyrs whom Romans had burned with fire, carved up with steel or thrown to be torn apart by beasts'.[33] In honouring relics from Rome as Einhard did, the Franks – second Romans – put themselves a cut above the first. In doing so they transformed the economic fortunes of a city almost no longer eternal. We are accustomed to think of the first half of the eighth century as the time when the papacy, finally exasperated by imperial theological deviance, turned its face to the West and the Franks. More to the immediate point was that the ancient Mediterranean economy that linked Rome and southern Italy to the East for fifteen hundred years was at last knocked flat soon after 700 by withdrawal of imperial funding (prompted initially by the pope's refusal to pay a new tax for Rome's defence). In subsequent decades, its fortunes began recovery through what it is not too much to call 'invisible earnings' from its tourist trade.[34] That is the sort of business that Einhard's men were in Rome to do for his 'Seligenstadt' (i.e. 'Saintston' in English terms). It is well to recall in pondering Brixworth that this was a time of closer contact between popes and English regimes than before or long after. Papal legates were on hand to draft the famous *capitula* promulgated by Mercian and Northumbrian authorities in 786, and again at the 824 Council of Clofesho (somewhere not far from here if not exactly on this spot).[35] The papal chancery drafted and preserved formulae guaranteeing the right of Mercian kings to direct lordship of their own abbeys, rights on which Cenwulf called successfully when confronting Archbishop Wulfred over just this issue after 816.[36] The most famous Offa coin is a gold dinar inscribed for some reason in Kufic (early Arabic) script, and found somewhere in Rome. In such a context, we can well imagine Brixworth's lord setting out for Rome to raid its catacombs for relics with which to furnish his state-of-the-art crypt.

I draw this lecture towards a close by looking more briefly at another great Carolingian church that may be linked with Brixworth: Fulda, St Boniface's beloved foundation and Einhard's *alma mater*. Its first abbot, St Sturmi, was no layman; he had indeed travelled to Monte Cassino on Boniface's instructions to absorb the full ramifications of St Benedict's Rule. But he was a south German nobleman, as was his relative, biographer and successor, Eigil.[37] Although it was to Abbot Baugulf of Fulda that Charlemagne and Alcuin sent the surviving copy of their letter on the cultivation of Latin literature, in important ways Fulda preserved vestiges of a secular culture, such as its commitment to use of the vernacular which, like its characteristically 'insular' script, it may have owed to its English founders.[38] At any rate, the *Hildebrandslied*, the single surviving fragment of continental Germanic epic, is of Fulda provenance. Perhaps from the anthology of 'barbarian and most ancient songs' that Einhard is at pains to tell us Charlemagne collected, it may have played its own subliminal part in inspiring so confidently secular a *Life* of one great layman by another.[39]

But I want to finish with a couple of observations on Fulda's story that bear more directly on Brixworth's. First its relations with episcopal authority. Like other great monastic founders, Boniface combined the uncompromising assertion of his episcopal or metropolitan authority with insistence that his very own abbey should be absolutely exempt from any overseer's jurisdiction and be subject only to the pope in Rome.[40] This had unhappy consequences after his death as a martyr in 754. Frustrated in his ambition to secure the holy remains of Boniface, Lul, his English successor as archbishop of Mainz, was determined to exercise archiepiscopal authority over the abbey. Obstructed once more by Abbot Sturmi, he appealed to King Pippin, Charlemagne's father, who duly exiled the abbot to the northern Frankish abbey of Jumièges. Lul then inserted his own nominee as abbot, one Mark, who was predictably not a success and was soon driven out by the monks who then appealed to Pippin. Finally, God (or someone) put it in the king's mind to bring back Sturmi, and Fulda's papal charter of exemption was renewed.[41] But that was not the last of the abbey's troubles with an abbot. By the early ninth century, Ratger, successor to Sturmi and Baugulf, had fallen out badly with his monks, not least over the construction of a gigantic new abbey church. It is at once apparent that if Seligenstadt and Brixworth are big, the new Fulda was enormous: at well over 200 feet, it was more than half the length of Old St Peter's itself. Furthermore, it was actually modelled on St Peter's in that at its west end, where the lie of the land and of St Peter's tomb dictated the location of the Vatican's own high altar, a second apse was provided, complete with transept, and it was there, in obvious parallel with St Peter's location, that the shrine of St Boniface was set. The brethren were much exercised by the hard work required of them by construction. Boniface had long ago complained forcefully to King Æthelbald of Mercia about monks being obliged to labour on the King's Works.[42] Now Fulda's monks appealed once more, this time to Charlemagne, that 'immense and superfluous buildings and other useless works, by which the brethren are exhausted beyond measure, be stopped; they should rather, as the Rule decreed, spend the due hours in reading and proper work.' The dispute was ultimately resolved by Charlemagne's son and heir, Louis: Ratger was removed in favour of Sturmi's biographer, Eigil; who, however, went on to insist that the new church be finished.[43]

The second of these stories is a salutary reminder to fans of mighty constructions like Brixworth that they were once building sites with all the attendant dust, noise, profanities and general stress so familiar to almost all academics at some stage of our lives. But the first is, if less *piquant*, ultimately more important still. It reminds us that the programmes of bishop and monk, of the active and contemplative lives, were not easily reconciled, and that *both* sides had a case. If Leah, the uglier of the two sisters Jacob married, was more fertile than the more decorous Rachel, as Pope Gregory the Great reminded readers of his *Book of Pastoral Rule* (itself written in agonized response to his own removal from monastic peace to the strains of papal office), there was no getting away from Christ's own words, that Mary had chosen a

'better part' than her busy, fussy sister, Martha. Monks, we should remember, were not usually priests in the movement's first centuries, and it was quite reasonable for bishops to claim to be able to discipline them like any others in their flock. But by the same token, monasticism was originally a protest against an established Church hierarchy as much as against the sordid rhythms of a secular life wherein bishops after the Peace of the Church were increasingly embroiled: monks must, as Cassian said, 'at all costs flee from women and bishops'.[44] This ultimately was what prompted Irish monks in the seventh century to evade episcopal supervision, and what they and then Englishmen like Boniface, or even Bede's own abbots, demanded for their own houses. Yet again, bishops could fairly consider that monkish contemplation wasted much-needed manpower and revenue, which was in essence what prompted Carolingian prelates and English contemporaries like Canterbury's Archbishop Wulfred or Worcester's Bishop Heahberht, to move in on royal or lordly abbeys like Minster-in-Thanet or Westbury-on-Trym. And if, as they and kings like Æthelbald came to suspect, monasteries were little more than halls of cowled seculars, they could reasonably aim to take them over; Bede himself had demanded no less. My point is that the conundrum had no solution, which is one reason why historians as yet disagree whether minsters like this served a primarily pastoral or prayerful function. Action and contemplation alike were legitimate Christian lives; if they ran in opposed directions then that was in the nature of a kingdom that in the end was 'not of this world'.

What happened with increasing speed from the eleventh century was that a solution of sorts was hammered out. On the one hand, bands of monks became orders of ordained religious, with independent disciplinary machinery. Meanwhile, the full weight of episcopal authority was brought to bear on the Church at large. There was no place either way for minsters like this: that is, communities of two or more priests, perhaps married, who had served a much more dispersed flock than the village parishes that now replaced them. This was itself a 'Reformation' so comprehensive, and driven forward with such energy – especially after the fourth Lateran Council held in 1215 by Innocent III (as great a pope as ever was) – that as a consequence in England, as in Ireland and large tracts of Europe, almost every vestige of earlier arrangements vanished without trace. The first we hear of Brixworth since the seventh century is that it was Northamptonshire's second wealthiest royal estate in Domesday, with a priest – mention of whom is often an indication of an earlier minster.[45] Our next news comes not long afterwards in a confirmation by Henry II of it and several other churches to Salisbury Cathedral. At this time, Salisbury was seemingly scheduled as a school for clerks to man the post-Conquest government's burgeoning bureaucracy.[46] It may be no accident that some of the other churches are said in this charter to have been gifted by the Conqueror to Osmund, his one-time royal priest and founder of the Salisbury community; nor that among those churches were two ancient minsters, Godalming and Farringdon.[47] What we might deduce from this skimpiest of patterns is that Brixworth was

one of those minsters effectively absorbed by the Crown, under the pressure of its own ever-mounting secularity as well as the disturbed conditions (shall we say) of the ninth and earlier tenth century.[48] The reforming Bishop Æthelwold could have found it in Peterborough's scanty records, as its historian Hugh Candidus did in the twelfth century; but it lay too far from his immediate purview (and was perhaps too valuable to the king) to come under his monastic hammer. Instead, it lingered to be swallowed as a prime asset by the post-Conquest governing machine's HQ. Its Salisbury patron, over the other side of five counties, was itself too distant to be bothered with its restoration as a spanking new village church – 'EE', 'Dec.' or 'Perp.' in Pevsnerian terms. So it is that, like Deerhurst, we have it still.

And so to two brief concluding reflections. One I have put more than once before but it will bear another repeat. It is that in considering the early history of Christianity in our islands or the rest of the West, we need to realize that the cake we crave is not simultaneously to be drooled over and eaten. Christianity came into the world with the message that treasure is to be invested in Heaven. Archaeologists still sure this has no bearing on the slow evaporation of furnished burial have not, I fear, been reading the New Testament; but then nor do most other people nowadays. The landed aristocracies of post-Roman Europe in fact did a very fine job of managing their investments: first in the form of relic-shrines cast or carved in precious metal, or manuscripts adorned in much the same repertoire and techniques; increasingly, from the Carolingian era, with buildings approaching in scale and sophistication those the Romans left in northern Europe, and from the eleventh century far exceeding them. At the same time, they *were* investments. We cannot expect them to have been viewed with due detachment by those who organized and financed them. Brixworth bespeaks a rich and powerful patron, such as we know Deerhurst to have had in the earlier ninth century. That it probably remained in some way in his family's power, and definitely remained a community, was so that he could be sure to be prayed for in perpetuity. Such was the primary consideration, ahead of intended or actual pastoral functions. That said, it was in a patron's interest to display his munificence as vividly as possible. The result is a book like '*Cerne*' or a building such as Brixworth.

Ecclesiastical history is indeed too important to be left to ecclesiastical historians, monastic history certainly too important to be left to monks, then or now. On the other hand, the dialectic of Christian history, more than of most religions, is one of recurrent surges of protest in its founder's name against a system too cosily established. It is more or less what Jesus did himself; it was what reformers were doing in the twelfth century as in the sixteenth and nineteenth, or in today's surgent Pentecostalisms. It is also what Bede and Boniface were protesting in the eighth century; they were perhaps the first westerners prompted by the shock of the advent of a new and spectacularly triumphant prophetic Faith to raise their voices against the backslidings that must have brought it about, as so often in ancient Israel. That voice, never quite silent amidst the dreams, compromises and confusions of the

post-Charlemagne period, led on to tenth-century movements of specifically mo-
nastic reform, and so to Giles Constable's infinitely more general 'Twelfth-Century
Reformation'. We shall understand very little of Christian history, or all it would
mean for Eurasian culture as a whole, unless we appreciate that it is more than a
story of adjustment to worldly realities. It has also, always, been the expression of an
other-worldly ideal, of a Faith.

NOTES

The text of this lecture is substantially that read by the author in the church of All Saints'
Brixworth on November 1st 2003. Minimal editorial interventions have been made so as to
preserve the integrity and tone of the spoken version. The author was able to revise the text
prior to publication, though the notes have been supplied (according to his indications) by the
kindness of Dr. J. Story.

1   J. Campbell (ed.), *The Anglo-Saxons* (2nd edn, London, 1991), p. 246; P. Wormald, *How do we
    know so much about Anglo-Saxon Deerhurst?*, Deerhurst Lecture 1991 (1993); above, chapter 7.
2   R. D. H. Gem, 'A B C: How should we periodise Anglo-Saxon architecture?', in *The Anglo-
    Saxon Church: Papers on History, Architecture, and Archaeology in Honour of Dr H. M. Taylor*,
    ed. L. A. S. Butler and R. K. Morris, Council for British Archaeology Research Report 60
    (1986), pp. 146–155; idem, 'Architecture of the Anglo-Saxon Church, 735 to 870: from
    Archbishop Ecgberht to Archbishop Ceolnoth', *Journal of the British Archaeological Associ-
    ation* 146 (1993), pp. 29–66. See further, P. Rahtz and L. Watts, *St. Mary's Church,
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    (Woodbridge, 1997). On the Deerhurst Charter of 804 (S 1187) see Wormald, *Anglo-
    Saxon Deerhurst*, pp. 2–3, 20–2 (above, pp. 224–5, 236–7); idem, 'Charters, Laws and the
    Settlement of Disputes in Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Settlement of Disputes in Early
    Medieval Europe*, ed. W. Davies and P. Fouracre (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 149–68 at 152–7.
3   A. B. Kuypers, *The Prayerbook of Aedeluald the Bishop* (Cambridge, 1902); S. M. Kuhn,
    'From Canterbury to Lichfield', *Speculum* 23 (1948), pp. 619–27; idem, 'Some early
    Mercian manuscripts', *Review of English Studies* NS 8 (1957), pp. 355–70; K. Sisam,
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    NS 8 (1957), 370–4 responding to Kuhn's paper.
4   Levison, *Continent*, pp. 295–302; D. N. Dumville, 'Liturgical Drama and Panegyric
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5   M. P. Brown, *The Book of Cerne: Prayer, Patronage and Power in Ninth-Century England*
    (London and Toronto, 1996).
6   P. Brown, *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity, A.D. 200–1000* (2nd
    edn, Oxford, 2003); R. A. Markus, *Christianity in the Roman World* (London, 1974).
7   P. Ní Chatháin and M. Richter (eds.), *Irland und Europa: die Kirche im Frühmittelalter*
    (Stuttgart, 1984).
8   R. Sharpe, 'Some Problems Concerning the Organization of the Church in early Medieval
    Ireland', *Peritia* 3 (1984), pp. 230–70; idem, 'Churches and Communities in Early

Medieval Ireland: Towards a Pastoral Model', in *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, ed. J. Blair and R. Sharpe, Studies in the Early History of Britain (Leicester, 1992), pp. 81–109; D. Ó Corráin, *Ireland before the Normans* (Dublin, 1972); idem, 'The Early Irish Churches: Some Aspects of Organisation', in *Irish Antiquity: Essays and Studies Presented to Professor M. J. O'Kelly*, ed. D. Ó Corráin (Cork, 1981), pp. 327–41.

9   See now, J. Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 2005).

10   J. Blair, 'A Saint for Every Minster? Local Cults in Anglo-Saxon England', in *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West*, ed. A. Thacker and R. Sharpe (Oxford, 2002), pp. 455–94.

11   S. Wood, *The Proprietary Church in Western Europe* (Oxford, forthcoming).

12   Ep. Ecgb., cc. 10–11; Plummer, I, pp. 405–23. For a translation see, L. Sherley-Price, R. E. Latham and D. H. Farmer, *Bede: Ecclesiastical History of the English People, with Bede's Letter to Ecgbert and Cuthbert's Letter on the Death of Bede* (Harmondsworth, 1990), pp. 337–51 and *EHD* I, no. 175. See also, P. Wormald, *Bede and the Conversion of England: the Charter Evidence*, Jarrow Lecture (1984), pp. 19–23 (pp. 153–7 in this volume); P. Sims-Williams, *Religion and Literature in Western England 600–800*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 3 (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 147–54.

13   See, for example, S 89 (the 'Ismere' diploma) where the recipient Cyneberht is called *dux* and *comes* and was given land to 'establish a monastery'. He may also be the layman of the same name who witnessed S 90–2 (discussed in Sims-Williams, *Religion and Literature*, pp. 148–9). Also S 1411 which records a grant to Abbot Ceolfrith, Cyneberht's son (757x774). See further *The Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England*, a searchable online database, currently available at www.pase.ac.uk [hereafter *PASE*], s.n 'Cyneberht' and 'Ceolfrith'.

14   *Laws of Alfred*, c. 20; *Gesetze*, I, pp. 60–1. Extracts from the laws are translated in *EHD* I, no. 33 and S. Keynes and M. Lapidge, *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources* (Harmondsworth, 1983), pp. 163–72.

15   G. Felten, *Äbte und Laienäbte im Frankenreich: Studie zum Verhältnis von Staat und Kirche im früheren Mittelalter*, Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters 20 (Stuttgart, 1980); J. Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons in the Gorze Reform: Lotharingia c. 850–1000* (Oxford, 2001); M. Herbert, *Iona, Kells and Derry: The History and Hagiography of the Monastic Family of Columba* (Oxford, 1988, reprint Dublin, 1996); D. Ó Corráin, *Ireland before the Normans* (Dublin, 1972); R. Sharpe, as above n. 8.

16   For the text of Boniface's Letter to Cuthberht see *Die Briefe des heiligen Bonifatius und Lullus*, ed. M. Tangl, MGH Ep. Sel. 1 (Berlin, 1916), no. 78 and *Briefe des Bonifatius, Willibalds Leben des Bonifatius, nebst einigen zeitgenössischen Dokumenten*, ed. R. Rau, Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters 4b (Darmstadt, 1968), no. 78. For a translation, see E. Emerton (ed.), *The Letters of Saint Boniface* (New York, 1940), no. 62 and C. H. Talbot, *The Anglo-Saxon Missionaries in Germany* (London, 1954), no. 35. For the text of the 747 Council see *Councils*, III, pp. 362–76; for a translation, see J. Johnson, *A Collection of the Laws and Canons of the Church of England from its First Foundation to the Conquest, and from the Conquest to the Reign of King Henry VI* (2 vols, new edn. London, 1850–1), I, pp. 240–63.

17   D. S. Sutherland and D. Parsons, 'The Petrological Contribution to the Survey of All Saints' Brixworth, Northamptonshire: An Interim Study', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 137 (1984), pp. 45–64.

18   S. Keynes, *The Councils of Clofesho*, Vaughan Paper 38, Brixworth Lecture 1993 (1994), esp. pp. 25–30 and Table II; idem, *An Atlas of Attestations in Anglo-Saxon Charters, c. 670–1066.* Department of Anglo-Saxon Norse and Celtic (Cambridge, 1993).

19   Keynes, *Councils of Clofesho*, pp. 35–6 and 47; F. M. Stenton, 'Medeshamstede and its colonies', in Stenton, *Prep. ASE*, pp. 179–92.

20   Keynes, *Councils of Clofesho*, p. 47, and Table II where these three men are 2nd, 6th and 8th in the list of abbots.

21   Keynes, *Councils of Clofesho*, Table II.

22   S 193 and S 197; Keynes, *Councils of Clofesho*, pp. 39–40 and 47.

23   For charters which mention Eanberht *dux* see S 39, 159, 165, 167–8; for Wigbert see S 146, 150–1, 153, 155; for Wicga see S 40, 131–2, 136, 146, 150–1, 153, 155, 159, 161, 1186a, 1187, 1260; and for Wigheard, see S 40, 154, 161, 164, 173, 180, 1187, 1260. Details of charters and other sources concerning these men can be found in *PASE* (as n. 13 above).

24   D. Parsons, 'Brixworth and its Monastery Church', in *Mercian Studies*, ed. A. Dornier (Leicester, 1977), pp. 173–90; idem, 'Brixworth and the Boniface Connexion', *Northamptonshire Past and Present* 6:4 (1980), pp. 179–83; idem, 'St. Boniface – Clofesho – Brixworth', *Baukunst des Mittelalters in Europa: Hans Erich Kubach zum 75. Geburtstag*, ed. F. J. Much (Stuttgart, 1988), pp. 371–84.

25   F. Wormald (ed.), *English Kalendars before A.D. 1100*, Henry Bradshaw Society 72 (London, 1934); A. Borst (ed.), *Der karolingische Reichskalender und seine Überlieferung bis ins 12. Jahrhundert* (3 vols), MGH Libri Memoriales 2 (Hannover, 2001), II, 961–4.

26   Levison, *Continent*, p. 160, with reference to Alcuin's letter written in 800 to Archbishop Arn of Salzburg recommending the celebration of the feast.

27   Brown, *The Book of Cerne*, pp. 147–51.

28   *Translatio et miracula SS Marcellini et Petri*, ed. G. Waitz, MGH SRG 15.1 (Hannover, 1888), pp. 239–64. An English translation is now available in P. E. Dutton (ed. and trans), *Charlemagne's Courtier, The Complete Einhard*, Readings in Medieval Civilizations and Cultures 2 (Peterborough, Ontario, 1998), pp. 69–130.

29   D. Ganz, 'The Preface to Einhard's *Vita Karoli*', in *Einhard: Studien zu Leben und Werk*, ed. H. Scheffers, Arbeiten der Hessischen Historischen Kommission, NS 12 (Darmstadt, 1997), pp. 299–310; idem, 'Einhard's Charlemagne: The Characterisation of Greatness', in *Charlemagne: Empire and Society*, ed. J. Story (Manchester, 2005), pp. 38–51; idem, '*Einhardus Peccator*', in *Lay Intellectuals in the Carolingian World*, ed. P. Wormald (forthcoming). See also, J. M. H. Smith, 'Einhard: The Sinner and the Saints', *TRHS* 6th ser. 13 (2003), pp. 55–77.

30   Plans of Seligenstadt and Steinbach can be consulted in Dutton, *Charlemagne's Courtier*, p. 68. See also, K. Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque Architecture 800–1200* (4th edn, New Haven and London, 1993), p. 62; O. Müller, *Die Einhard-Abtei Seligenstadt am Main* (Konigstein, 1973); T. Ludwig, O. Müller and I. Widdra-Spiess, *Die Einhards-Basilika in Steinbach bei Michelstadt im Odenwald* (2 vols, Mainz, 1996). For plans and a discussion of the architecture of Einhard's churches (and bibliography) see, J. M. H.

Smith, '"Emending evil ways and praising God's omnipotence": Einhard and the use of Roman Martyrs', in *Conversion in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages: Seeing and Believing*, ed. K. Mills and A. Grafton (Rochester, NY, 2003), pp. 189–223, especially pp. 198–200 and 206–10.

31   D. Ganz, 'Humour as History in Notker's *Gesta Karoli Magni*', in *Monks, Friars and Nuns in Medieval Society*, ed. E. B. King (Sewanee, Tenn., 1989), pp. 171–83.

32   P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (London, 1981).

33   *Lex Salica*, 'prologue', ed. K. A. Eckhardt, MGH Leges 4.ii (Hannover, 1969), 2–7; for an English translation see K. Fischer Drew (trans.), *Laws of the Salian Franks* (Philadelphia, 1991).

34   J. M. H. Smith (ed.), *Early Medieval Rome and the Christian West. Essays in Honour of Donald Bullough* (Leiden, 2000), especially J. M. H. Smith, 'Old Saints, New Cults: Roman Relics in Carolingian Francia', pp. 317–40, and A. Thacker, 'In Search of Saints: the English Church and the Cult of Roman Apostles and Martyrs in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries', pp. 247–77.

35   Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils*, pp. 153–90, 285–6; J. Story, *Carolingian Connections: Anglo-Saxon England and Carolingian Francia, c. 750–870* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 55–92.

36   Levison, *Continent*, pp. 29–32 and 255–7; N. P. Brooks, *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury. Christ Church from 597 to 1066*, Studies in the Early History of Britain (London and New York, 1984), pp. 186–7; Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils*, pp. 196–202; Story, *Carolingian Connections*, pp. 199–209.

37   The Life of Sturmi by Egil is edited by P. Engelbert, *Die Vita Sturmi des Eigil von Fulda: literarkritisch-historische Untersuchung und Edition*, Historische Kommission für Hessen und Waldeck 29 (Marburg, 1968). Translations are in C. H. Talbot, *The Anglo-Saxon Missionaries in Germany* (London, 1954), pp. 181–202 and T. F. X. Noble and T. Head (eds.), *Soldiers of Christ: Saints and Saints' Lives from Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (London, 1995), pp. 165–87.

38   On the Anglo-Saxon script of Fulda see especially, H. Spilling, 'Angelsächsische Schrift in Fulda', in *Von der Klosterbibliothek zur Landesbibliothek. Beiträge zum zweihundertjährigen Bestehen der hessischen Landesbibliothek Fulda*, ed. A. Brall, Bibliothek des Buchwesens 6 (Stuttgart and Fulda, 1978), pp. 47–98.

39   Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, c. 29; O. Holder-Egger, ed. MGH SRG (Hannover, 1911), pp. 33–4 and R. Rau (ed.), *Quellen zur karolingischen Reichsgeschichte* (3 vols, Darmstadt, 1956), I, pp. 164–211 at 200–1. For an English translation see Dutton, *Charlemagne's Courtier*, pp. 34–5. For a critical edition of the *Hildebrandslied* see, *Das Hildebrandslied. Eine geschichtliche Einleitung für Laien, mit Lichtbildern der Handschrift, alt- und neudeutschen Texten*, ed. G. Baesecke (Halle an der Saale, 1945).

40   Pope Zacharias' privilege for Fulda is in E. E. Stengel (ed.), *Urkundenbuch des Klosters Fulda* (2 vols, Marburg, 1913–58), I, *Die Zeit des Abtes Sturmi*, pp. 25–32, nos 15–16.

41   For the *Supplex Libellus* of the monks of Fulda, see E. Dümmler (ed.), MGH Ep. IV, *Epistolae Karolini Aevi* II (Berlin, 1895), pp. 548–51.

42   N. P. Brooks, 'The Development of Military Obligations in Eighth- and Ninth-century England', in *England Before the Conquest*: pp. 69–84; Keynes, *Councils of Clofesho*, p. 5.

43 *Vita Eigilis*, ed. W. Arndt, MGH SS XV (Hannover, 1888), 221–33 and *Vita Eigilis metrica*, ed. E. Dümmler, MGH *Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini* II (Berlin, 1884), pp. 96–117.

44 'Omnimodis monachum fugere debere mulieres et episcopos', John Cassian, *De institutis coenobiorum* col. 9, line 18, ed. M. Petschenig, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 17 (Vienna, 1888), p. 203.

45 Great Domesday Book, fol. 219v; *Domesday Book*, gen. ed. J. Morris (38 vols, Chichester, 1974–86), XXI, *Northamptonshire*, ed. F. and C. Thorn (Chichester, 1979), 1:19; J. Blair, 'Secular Minster Churches', in *Domesday Book: A Reassessment*, ed. P. H. Sawyer (London, 1985), pp. 104–42 at 106.

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47 W. Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum: a history of abbies and other monasteries, hospitals and frieries and cathedral and collegiate churches with their dependencies in England and Wales* (6 vols, new edn, London, 1817–30), VI.iii, p. 1296 (Salisbury V); D. E. Greenway, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1066–1300* (9 vols, London, 1968–91), IV, *Salisbury*, p. 55.

48 R. Fleming, 'Monastic Lands and England's Defence in the Viking Age', *EHR* 100 (1985), pp. 247–65; D. N. Dumville, 'Ecclesiastical Lands and the Defence of Wessex in the First Viking Age', in his *Wessex and England from Alfred to Edgar: Six Essays on Political, Cultural and Ecclesiastical Revival* (Woodbridge, 1992), pp. 29–54; Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, pp. 323–40.

Appendix: Hilda, Saint and Scholar (614–680)

O ne of the most striking (some would of course say shaming) facts of the history of Christianity is the prominence of women in a religion whose authorities have only very recently allowed them any sort of formally recognized status. Whereas in Islam the prophet's revelations as regards the role of women have on the whole been reflected in their very limited contribution to Muslim literature, whether as actors or authors, women were among the regular companions of Jesus in life, death and resurrection; and as patrons and correspondents of churchmen, as devotional authors in their own right, as missionaries, or simply as what Christians of all traditions know as saints even if only some use the title, women have seldom been far from the limelight ever since.

But if this has always been so, it was perhaps *particularly* so in the earliest period of the history of the English Church; and, as I shall want to stress, in that of other churches at a similar stage of development. The founders of this college, in an age that looked with especial affection on the Anglo-Saxon period (it would only be another eight years before Charles Plummer, editor of Bede, would celebrate in a University sermon what he regarded as the deeply appropriate coincidence that Queen Victoria had died in the millenary year of King Alfred – albeit mistaking his chronology, in that Alfred is now known to have died in 899, not 901), knew exactly what they were doing in fastening upon St Hilda as their patron. It would be no exaggeration to say that Hilda was among the dominant figures in the early English Church, and to an extent which later ecclesiastical history makes it difficult to envisage. It was after all at her abbey of Whitby that there was staged one of the great set pieces of Bede's story, the debate over the calculation of the date of Easter (664). It was also there that the presiding King Oswiu of Northumbria would eventually be buried (671). When the victorious spokesman for the Romans' cause, the aggressively eloquent young St Wilfrid, was subsequently appealing at the papal court against dismissal from his bishopric (678/80), Hilda was singled out alongside the archbishop of Canterbury as one of his two accusers. She had taken the opposite

view from Wilfrid's about Easter, and was evidently among the first in the long line
of English people who have found Wilfrid rather more than they could take. More
to the point, her hostility really counted.

Hilda's leading position in early English Christianity was in part, no doubt, a
function of her high birth: great-niece of the future mighty King Edwin (617–33),
born in 614 when her father was sharing Edwin's exile from the lethal enmity of the
formidable founder of Northumbrian power, King Æthelfrith, who duly secured her
father's poisoning; sister of the queen and queen-mother of the East Angles; cousin
of Oswiu's own queen, so aunt of Oswiu's daughter Ælfflæd, who succeeded her as
abbess of Whitby. It was also, as we shall see, a reflection of the remarkable
contribution that her abbey made to training the English episcopate. But what
needs to be stressed as the primary key to Hilda's prominence is that this was of a
piece with that of holy women in the early English Church generally. While we do
not know all that much about Hilda herself – no more than the edifying and moving
story of her holy life and death, together with something of the community she
created – we do know quite a lot, and can think more, about the remarkable part
that holy women as a class played in the early history of the English Church. It is
perhaps by studying St Hilda as a type of early English feminine sanctity that we
come closest to perceiving what sort of religious figure she was, and why she
mattered so much.

Hilda's and Whitby's story is told in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, Book IV, chapters
23–4. Now consider the rest of Book IV. Chapters 6–10 are about Barking, founded
by Æthelburh, sister of Bishop Eorcenwald of London (d. 693), who was possibly a
member of the Kentish royal family and was himself founder of Chertsey. Other
members of the community included Cuthburh, sister of King Ine of Wessex (688–
726) and widow of King Aldfrith of Northumbria (685–704); and Osburh, cousin
of the first great Anglo-Saxon man of letters, Aldhelm (d. 709), who wrote these
ladies a long and spectacularly verbose poem on Virginity of which we shall hear
more. Chapters 18–19 are on Æthelthryth (d. 679), daughter of an East Anglian
king, virginal survivor of two royal marriages (in so far as she had been encouraged
by St Wilfrid in her persisting virginity during the second of these, to King Ecgfrith
of Northumbria, Plummer thought that 'this matter may have had much to do with
alienating Ecgfrith from Wilfrid'). She was the foundress of Ely; and the incorrupt-
ness of her body on its translation led to many centuries of a miracle-laden cult.
Chapter 25 is about Coldingham, the one scandalous foundation, though Bede tells
us about its Sodom-like punishment from heaven rather than its sins. Its abbess, as
Bede also fails to tell us, was King Oswiu's sister, Æbba. In all, one-third of the
chapters in this book are about nuns and their houses.

There is plenty more evidence in and beyond the pages of Bede. In the Kentish
royal family, Æthelburh was daughter of the first Christian king, Æthelberht (d.
616), consort to Northumbria's King Edwin, then foundress of Lyminge. Æthel-
berht's grandaughter, Eanswith, was foundress of Folkestone; his great-granddaughter,

Eafe, founded Minster-in-Thanet; and *her* daughters were Mildburg, foundress of Much Wenlock, and Mildthryth, first abbess of Minster-in-Thanet. The wife of Earconberht, Æthelberht's grandson, was Seaxburh, sister of Æthelthryth of Ely and herself foundress of Minster-in-Sheppey; their daughter, Earcongota, was abbess of Faremoutiers-en-Brie, and their granddaughter, Werburh, was a Mercian princess who founded Hanbury. In the dynasty of Wessex, Cuthburh seems to have eventually left Barking to found Wimborne along with her sister, Cwenburh, and she was to be succeeded as abbess there by another sister, Tetta; the latter ruled over fifty nuns, who were 'supplied with a sufficiency of income by a reasonable provision'. I am myself member of a college whose history begins with an eighth-century princess, Frideswide; Dr John Blair has recently shown that there may be more of historical value in the story of her struggle to evade an importunate royal suitor than has usually been supposed. If a member of a royal family other than a king himself or his heir apparent is mentioned by Bede, it is usually because she was a princess who had been affianced to God and had gone on to become an important abbess. The nuptial imagery is constant and was clearly deeply felt. What we have thus been looking at in this plethora of eminently confusable names and relationships is a heavily intermarried dynastic network that now included God: at brides of Christ whose effect was to make their royal brothers and cousins into God's in-laws.

So far I have concentrated, as Bede and other narrative sources tended to, on royal women. Other evidence sometimes brings in lesser figures. If we look at the earliest Anglo-Saxon charters, that is title deeds, we find that eleven out of twenty-two Kentish charters down to *c*.760 are for women or women's foundations. The earliest Sussex charter is for the king's sister. Six out of twenty-two early Mercian and West Midland charters are for women, and few of these are known to have been royalty. Women were also beneficiaries of twelve of the twenty-one early charters not issued by kings. Some endowments established by these titles were very large, like the 120 hides of Bath Abbey – the hide having been described by Bede as the amount of land sufficient to support one ordinary free man and his family; whatever the case in the twentieth century, women's foundations were at least as handsomely endowed as men's in the seventh and early eighth. This impression is all the more striking for the fact that, as one moves on into the second half of the eighth century, charters for women's foundations become very scarce indeed, and, as we shall see, are in the tenth and eleventh century almost non-existent.

A different kind of evidence entirely, though just as revealing in its way, is provided by the 150 letters gathered together as the correspondence of the Anglo-Saxon missionary, St Boniface (d. 754): twenty-five, one-sixth of these, are to or from holy and learned women, and this proportion compares with thirty-six to or from popes and fifteen to or from secular rulers. It is a much higher proportion than you will find in the letters of Alcuin or Anselm or John of Salisbury – and again it is one that is already petering out in the later letters of the collection. Understanding St Hilda means appreciating that she is part of a very marked and remarkable

phenomenon, almost, though as we shall see not quite, unmatched in later Christian history. It therefore means understanding how this general phenomenon came about.

The first thing that needs to be grasped is that communities of religious women in the seventh and eighth centuries were not in fact confined to women: one aspect of life in seventh-century St Hilda's that may be more familiar to its 1990s than to its 1890s counterpart is that there were a lot of men about. For the religious houses that I am talking about were all or nearly all *double* monasteries, a type of foundation not entirely unknown in other Christian eras, but never otherwise, except in contemporary Frankish Gaul, so widespread or prominent. Historians have been inclined to boggle somewhat at these institutions, as did the great and wise Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury (669–90): his *Penitential* decreed that, 'it is not allowed for [communities of] men to have female monks, nor [those of women] men; but let us not destroy that which is the custom in this country.' Foundations of this type appear to have involved separate, and of course strictly segregated, communities of nuns and priests: thus at Barking, plague attacked 'that part of the monastery occupied by the men', and the abbess was anxiously concerned as to when plague would strike 'that part of the monastery, separated from the men's community, in which dwelt the company of the handmaidens of the Lord'. So the women went to tombs of brothers who had already died, and the intervention of a heavenly light directed that the sisters were soon to be buried somewhere else. Similarly, Wimborne is described – or conceivably misunderstood – by a continental hagiographer as 'two monasteries surrounded with high and stout walls – one of clerics, the other of women'. 'From the beginning of their foundation', the text continues, 'each of them was regulated by this rule of conduct, that neither of them was entered by the opposite sex; for a woman was never permitted to enter the congregation of men, or any man the house of the nuns, except priests only, who used to enter the churches solely to perform the office of mass, and when the service was solemnly concluded, immediately to return to their own dwelling.' Abbess Tetta gave orders about the house's affairs through a window, and 'denied entrance not merely to laymen and clerics but even to bishops'.

For all that, it is fairly clear that what we are looking at here are to all intents and purposes nunneries, though at a stage in the history of religious life for women when it was thought appropriate to provide for their liturgical needs by formal enrolment of a male membership too. Such houses were always presided over and administered by women. Another note that may be familiar to the ear of St Hilda's modern disciples is sounded by the story of the Dean of Wimborne, who 'was appointed on account of her zeal for discipline ... and who, in maintaining discipline imprudently and without discretion' (as deans will) 'aroused the hatred of most of them and especially of the young ... In this unyieldingness, therefore, she died, and a mound was raised over her grave ... according to custom; however, the anger of the young who hated her was not stilled, but on the contrary, as soon as they saw

the place where she was buried, they cursed her cruelty, nay more they mounted the mound, and, trampling it as if it were the dead corpse, they reproached the dead woman with the most bitter insults to relieve their mortification.' Hence, to explain the unparalleled role of St Hilda and her like among the first English Christians, we must in effect explain why nuns and nunneries were apparently so much more important in the seventh and early eighth centuries than they were ever to be again.

Now, it is important for what I want to suggest that the phenomenon is not in fact entirely unparalleled. In the Frankish Church of the sixth century, we find the great convent of Poitiers, founded by another royal widow and peopled, as we are told in many juicily scandalous pages by the Frankish historian, Gregory of Tours, by Frankish princesses who were by no means reconciled to monastic discipline. As late as the ninth century, and we shall shortly see why that *is* a notably late date, this foundation was important enough to be the subject on its own account of a royal decree stipulating that 'it contain 100 nuns and thirty clergy'. The seventh century saw a multiplication of foundations for women, including Nivelles, mother house of the family that was to become the Carolingian dynasty, and Chelles, founded by the ex-queen (and ex-Anglo-Saxon slave-girl), Balthildis. Some of these houses were in close touch with their English counterparts, and may indeed have provided them with the model for a 'double monastery': it was at Chelles that Hilda's sister took the veil. A very similar trend is evident in the tenth-century German Church. Thirty-six new communities for noblewomen were founded in the years 919–1024, fourteen nunneries, as against seven monasteries, in one diocese alone – though houses for men were already becoming commoner by the mid-eleventh century. As with the English, these were Churches of relatively recently converted peoples: the Franks had been becoming Christian from the late fifth century, the continental Saxons from the late eighth. The striking parallels between them are of the sort that would have persuaded historians in the generation of St Hilda's founder of the possible relevance of pagan attitudes to priestesses and other species of holy woman: writing about AD 100 the Roman historian, Tacitus, had said that the early Germans 'imputed an element of holiness and prophecy' to women. There may in fact be something in this, and I shall return at the end to an ironical side-effect if so. Meanwhile, however, the pattern was picked up by the late Professor Leyser in a brilliant study of the tenth-century Saxon nunneries; 'this prompts the question', he wrote, 'whether there was not some underlying common predicament in the pre-Christian beliefs and make-up of Franks, Saxons and Anglo-Saxons to which the endowment of nunneries furnished a welcome and eagerly sought-after solution.' Like the great historian he was, Professor Leyser never quite identified what he thought that 'common predicament' was. But he did point the way towards a likely common factor: the disposition of property under the new religious dispensation.

The first and basic point is that all these societies allowed for the accumulation of property by women in their own right: whether as heiresses to parents who had no male children, or as widows who had received bridal gifts from deceased menfolk,

and who were trustees for the property of children that might then die, leaving them as heiresses twice over. A second point is that property thus accumulating in female hands was of course highly vulnerable to the designs of men, very apt (at best) to pressurize its female tenants into a further marriage that would transfer it to themselves or their children. We might compare the legendary suitor of St Frideswide, who, as John Blair notes, bears a striking general resemblance to the Mercian king, Æthelbald (716–57): he was specifically reproved by St Boniface for his designs on 'nuns' who, in the light of what I am saying, may in reality have been very wealthy women. Third, one of the demographic facts of these societies, at this exceptionally violent and predatory stage of their first experience as triumphant yet intensely competitive warrior elites, was that women had a pronounced tendency to outlive men. Leyser shows vividly that early marriage and child-bearing, and early male death, could mean women outliving their menfolk by decades, and there are certainly Anglo-Saxon parallels here, such as Werburh of Hanbury, who may have survived her royal husband by sixty-six years. We thus have accumulations of new wealth in the vulnerable hands of women; and all this, fourthly, at a stage when endowment of churches offered a new strategy for securing property.

Without going into the hideous complexities of early Anglo-Saxon land tenure, it was of the essence of 'bookland' – 'chartered', and originally 'church', land – that it belonged to its recipient permanently, and could be disposed of however he or she wished. Bookland was therefore ideally suited for the foundation of nunneries, which would provide for a family's widows or unmarried daughters in such a way that the land remained in the family's interest rather than in that of a husband or second husband; and which, by the way, would also provide prayers eternally for the souls of the founders, who were often buried in the church, as Oswiu was in Hilda's Whitby. Like the warrior aristocrats of tenth-century Saxony, those of seventh-century England preferred that their sons be endowed with newly conquered lands so as not to diminish family *hereditas*. On the same principle, they founded nunneries on estates given to them by kings so that the family's landed interest could be expanded while its spiritual welfare was simultaneously provided for. It may even be, by an extension of the model of female domesticity, that prayer for the souls of a family was considered an appropriate woman's role, just as the pastoral needs of the Church were more appropriately met by men. What we may thus be seeing, in the first two or three generations of these new Churches, is the compounding of demographic patterns by the arrival of forms of land tenure that encouraged new property strategies. This proposition need not be thought excessively cynical. I would much prefer to think that women's religious life was given opportunities for expression that it seldom otherwise had, and that this opportunity was, sometimes at least, taken up with all the holy enthusiasm that Bede depicts.

All the same, there is some reason to think that the nuns of St Hilda's time were leading lives that were not unmarked by aristocratic tastes acquired in their inmates' previous secular existence. The prose and verse treatises on virginity addressed by

Aldhelm to the nuns of Barking leave a rather different impression from Bede's moving stories. They are studded with admonitions against pride, particularly pride in clothes: '*wives* have necklaces, bracelets and jewelled rings' whereas 'virgins should shine with modesty'; '*wives* are busy being alluringly coiffed with the twisted curls of their ringlets curling round the tongs and painting their cheeks with the scarlet rouge of artificial colour', while 'virgins bear their palm-leaf on an uncombed mane of hair with their tresses carelessly matted.' Nuns are to avoid 'dressed up impudence', like that of the woman St Cyprian characterized, 'clothed as if she either had a husband or were on the prowl for one'; 'adornment', as he had observed, 'is most prized by those to whom modesty is worthless.' 'Shameless dress and immodest jewellery condemn you,' warned Aldhelm, 'nor can she who lives in such a way as to be the subject of passion be counted among the virgins of Christ.' Cuthburh of Barking and Wimborne could, as Aldhelm's translator has pointed out, be identical with a lady of that name who had once been a queen, and who was seen in a vision of hell immersed in a penitential pit and being tortured for her carnal sins; if so, it may be not so much that she had actually betrayed her vow of virginity, or rather widowhood, but that in spite of Aldhelm's admonitions she had maintained in her nunnery a style of living which was more in keeping with that of a king's ex-consort than of a bride of Christ. This is certainly the general impression suggested by archaeology: what should one find amongst the items dug up in – otherwise disastrously incompetent – excavations at Whitby but combs, nail-cleaners, earpicks, tweezers, pins, earrings and costume jewellery.

Yet cosmetic adornment is very far from the whole story of Hilda's Whitby and its counterparts. The finds from Whitby include a number of pens as well as knick-knacks. A much clearer message than that to be read between Aldhelm's lines, and one that can hardly have been missed by Miss Beale in making her choice of patron, is the emphasis of Bede on Whitby's place in the early history of English learning. 'We have in fact seen five from this monastery', he says, 'who afterwards became bishops'; of one of these, Oftfor, Bishop of Worcester, 'it may be said that he had devoted himself to the reading and observance of the scriptures in Hilda's monastery'; and Tatfrith, a predecessor at Worcester, 'was a most energetic and learned man of great ability, also from Hilda's monastery'. One of the very earliest English prose compositions was a *Life* of the Apostle of the English, Pope Gregory the Great, that was written at Whitby. Much more celebrated, and of particular joy to the Victorians, was Whitby's cowherd, Caedmon, author of the first English religious poetry: whatever his agricultural origins or the more or less miraculous circumstances of his acquisition of the poetic gift, the fact remains that the earliest vernacular expressions of Christian devotion came out of Whitby. Of the original St Hilda's, then, it can be said not only that its endowment was at least a match for that of foundations for men, but also (happily a much less unfamiliar note, and one to gladden the heart of your Fellow Librarian) that a fair slice of this endowment was spent on the library.

Once again, we have to try to understand this, and we can once again do so by noting the wider context. You may recall Boniface's twenty-five female correspondents: one of these in particular, St Leoba, whose *Life* provided the account of Wimborne that I quoted, was renowned for her learning in the scriptures, and she was regularly consulted by bishops; she once dreamed of 'an inexhaustible purple thread of wisdom being pulled from her mouth'. The late great German palaeographer, Bernhard Bischoff, and his disciple from your sister college of Newnham, Rosamond McKitterick, have been able to identify a significant corpus of manuscripts written by scribes from Chelles. They include not just Gospel books but works of canon law, patristics, ecclesiastical history, science – meaning Isidore of Seville's survey of 'Natural Things' – and hagiography. Other communities of women involved in comparable activity were Jouarre, Remiremont and Laon, and perhaps Leoba's own Tauberbischofsheim. Once more, it would be hard to match the scope and sophistication of this output in any later age of Christian culture.

So what explains it? My suggestion of sixteen years ago (by no means universally accepted these days, it must be said) was that the newly Christian aristocracies of early medieval Europe had a mixed attitude to literate learning. Up to a point it was warmly acceptable to all, yet for men it was also in competition with a warrior ethos – perhaps more familiar to modern eyes as an athlete's ethos – which found books in some sense unmanly: as was observed by wise King Theodoric of the Ostrogoths (493–526), 'the man who is to show daring and be great in renown ought to be freed from the timidity which teachers inspire; if the fear of the strap once came over [a young Goth] he would never withstand sword and spear.' But warrior priorities were not of course shared by women, and their exposure to the learned heritage of the Ancient World was therefore untrammelled. Needlework did not offer the same competition to books as hunting and warfare. All of this may account for the connection between women and the book in the earlier Middle Ages, and, of special relevance for the Whitby of Hilda and Caedmon, between women and a vernacular literature particularly, inasmuch as this gave literacy its scope without the training that higher learning demanded. There is no denying the number of times that early medieval women are found as educators, most famously in the case of the 'book of Saxon poems' that King Alfred's mother promised to the most enthusiastic of her sons.

Nunneries were of course to retain some of their exceptionally aristocratic flavour throughout the rest of the Middle Ages and beyond. Fontevrault, the burial place of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine as well as of their son, Richard I, was a double (in fact a multiple) monastery until the French Revolution, and was ruled over by a long sequence of grand Valois and Bourbon ladies. On an altogether lesser if no less memorable note, there are the ladies ('dames') of Marrick Priory in Hilda M. Prescott's immortal novel, *The Man on a Donkey*. Yet in almost every other way the picture changed utterly after this early phase, and from a woman's point of view almost wholly for the worse. A modern study finds that only one house for women

out of fourteen south of the Loire and west of the Rhône had a continuous existence from its foundation to the twelfth century: Poitiers itself. It goes on to highlight the shocking ninth-century Frankish case of the *congregatio monacharum* that one Immena founded on family lands, and where her father revealingly asked that he be buried. This community was actually *dissolved* by her brother, a distinguished archbishop of Bourges, so as to establish his own new foundation *for men*. As Professor Leyser noted, there was a general decline in the relative position of German nunneries as against monasteries from the third decade of the eleventh century: the numbers of convents fell away as noblemen came to recognize the perils of losing so much *hereditas* to the Church. Sir Richard Southern has observed the positively chauvinist attitude of the Cluniacs, the Benedictine elite of the tenth and eleventh centuries: their one foundation for women out of thousands was a house to cater for the womenfolk of men who had joined their order. The twelfth-century Cistercians were likewise able to ignore the fact that they did actually have a women's department for several decades. Although Carolingian queens and princesses could be notably learned ladies, and though there is one now very famous *Manual* on the proper Christian life written by a Carolingian laywoman for her layman son, it is hard to think of one other Carolingian work of significance, even a hagiography, whose subject or author was a woman. In England itself, the correspondents and patrons of Ælfric, the leading scholar and homilist of the turn of the millennium, did *not* include women. In general, women are strangely as well as depressingly thin on the ground in the annals of later Anglo-Saxon spirituality and culture. There *were* eight late Saxon nunneries of some wealth. But even Shaftesbury was nothing like as rich as the greater men's houses, and seven of the eight were under royal patronage: the eighth was the smallest, though itself founded by one of the greatest and most munificent late Saxon noblemen.

So where had it all gone wrong? My good friend Professor Janet Nelson has taken Tacitus' hint and pondered whether what might be called a proto-witchcraze was not somehow involved: the soothsaying woman was a known adjunct of paganism, and she lived on in the form of the Wise Woman, even the fortune-teller. More obviously, the Carolingian age and its late Anglo-Saxon offshoot were ages of *reform*. Reform was on the whole a very male-dominated activity in the Middle Ages, and the intervention of females was regrettably associated with one of its salient problems: sex, and more particularly the procreation of heirs by clerics. By the time of Gregorian Reform in the later eleventh century, the dominant concern was to reinforce the division of clergy and laity, which by definition meant drawing a line between the religious life of male and female. Even the woman's role in the commemoration of the dead came to be invalidated by her incapacity to offer *mass* for souls in an age which no longer confined contemplative activity to the recitation of psalms.

Pulling all this together, and putting it in a slightly different way, the age of St Hilda, and its Frankish and German counterparts, were times of exceptionally rapid

change, political and military of course, but also spiritual and cultural. It may be that, in such an essentially experimental atmosphere, women had more religious scope precisely because they were the more marginalized sex, whereas their more establishment-minded menfolk were still comparatively committed to traditional ways, whether in inheritance custom or cultural taste. As Christianity itself became established, however, men extended their dominance in the new spheres too, and up to the usual point of virtual monopoly. So it was not so much that demographic realities or aesthetic priorities had necessarily changed in the fourth or later generations of the early English Church and its continental counterparts. It was more that men eventually came to know a good thing when they saw it.

What, if so, would the lesson of the first St Hilda's be for the second? It might perhaps be found in an echo of the Chancellor's message at your centenary dinner, but in the altogether less elegant language of another (altogether less distinguished) modern politician: 'Don't let the buggers get you down.' As men made their weight felt in the religious and educational life, the scope for women's expression narrowed, beginning to recover only in the nineteenth century. It is that recovery which St. Hilda's stood for. At the end of the twentieth, women themselves are much more divided over the question of mixed and single-sex colleges, so that there are new challenges to be met, new possibilities to explore. But whatever happens, the moral seems clear enough. If the second St Hilda's is not to go the way of the first, then, it must strive to retain as much as it possibly can of what has always made it so experimental and distinctive.

Index